This thought-provoking book by a militant Muslim social reformer in India is likely to cause a stir in political and intellectual circles. Never has any Muslim been so forthright and so bold in his condemnation of Muslim communal politics.

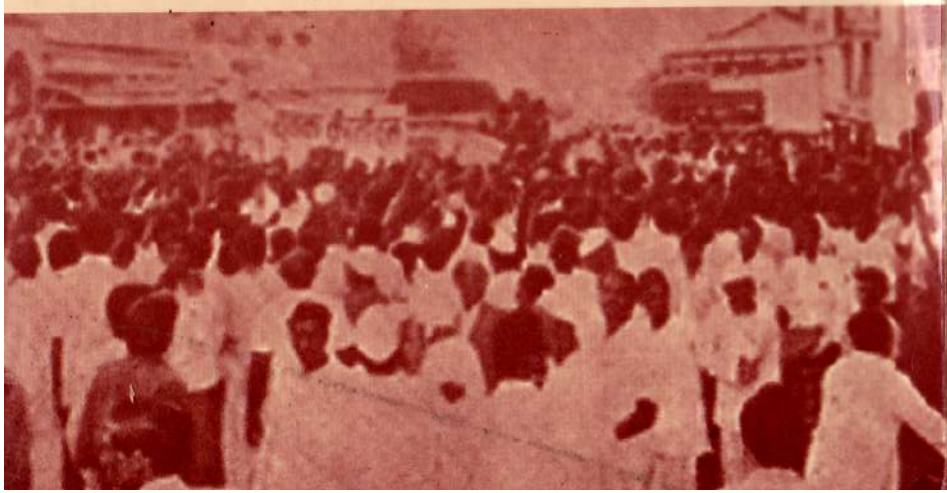
The Times of India

It is heartening to hear the authentic voice of modernism. We need such bold spirits.

The Sunday Tribune

His is an angry voice; the language is aggressive and forceful... the success of his writing lies in that. It makes one think....

Dinaman



MUSLIM POLITICS IN INDIA Hamid Dalwai

HAMID DALWAI

MUSLIM POLITICS IN INDIA

INDIAN SECULAR SOCIETY

MUSLIM POLITICS IN INDIA

HAMID DALWAI

Translated by
DILIP CHITRE

INDIAN SECULAR SOCIETY
Mumbai

This edition is dedicated to
the late A.B. Shah,
founder president of the
Indian Secular Society, a close associate of
Hamid Dalwai and a great humanist.

Price : Rs. 120; $ 8

Cover Design by Aditi Pai

Muslims Politics in India

© Mehrunissa Dalwai, 2002

Published in 2002
by the Indian Secular Society
M. N. Roy Human Development Campus,
Plot No. 6, F Block, Bandra (East), Mumbai 400 051.

Printed in India

Printed at Unity Printing Press, 119, Prabhadevi Industrial Estate,
Prabhadevi, V. S. Marg, Mumbai - 400 025.

CONTENTS

1. Preface
   - V.K. Sinha — VII
2. Foreword
   - A.B. Shah — 1
3. Historical Background — 17
4. Reading the Mind of Indian Muslims — 28
5. Muslims: The so-called Nationalists and the Communalists — 40
6. The Communal Malady: A Diagnosis — 55
7. Strange Bedfellows: Communists' Intimacy with Communalists — 62
8. The Chief Obstacle in the Way of Muslim Integration — 68
9. Muslim Opposition to Secular Integration: Nature, Causes and Remedies — 76
10. Humanistic Modernism the only Solution — 81
11. Indian Muslims at the Crossroads — 90
12. Failure of a Mission? — 103
13 The Meaning of Bangladesh — 112
14. The Angry Young Secularist
    - Dilip Chitre — 128

I am no more than man : when I order you anything respecting religion, receive it; and when I order you anything about the affairs of the world, then I am nothing more than man.

THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD

Preface

Muslim Politics in India is arguably the most perceptive analysis of Muslim politics to appear in the post-independent India. It retains the same freshness—and relevance—which it had when it was first published some three decades back. The book had, not surprisingly, hostile response from the orthodox, as also from the 'moderate' Muslims.

Dalwai's writing displayed the same passion and forthrightness, eloquence and commitment which informed all his actions as a social worker. Above all, was his courage of conviction which made him brave the various threats to his life and family. More than once was he physically assaulted.

Hamid Dalwai was born in a lower middle class family in Chiplun, Konkan district, Maharashtra in 1932. Unlike most Muslims, Dalwai went to a Marathi-medium school. It was in school that he was drawn to Rashtra Seva Dal, which he joined despite strong opposition from his family. Financial constraints prevented him from joining college and he came to Bombay in search of a living.

Dalwai was a gifted writer who broke into the Marathi literary scene as a highly promising writer. His novel *Indhan* is now recognised as a significant contribution to Marathi literature. Dalwai, literary writer, journalist, social worker was attracted by the ideas of Ram Manohar Lohia and became an active member of the Socialist Party.

Dalwai became increasingly concerned with the problems which beset the community into which he was born. He was not a believer but he did not disown the community which gave him birth. On the contrary, all his energies were now

directed into emancipatory projects of uplifting his community from the morass into which it had sunk.

Dalwai travelled extensively in India meeting Muslims from various strata of life—leaders, teachers, students, professionals, businessmen, writers, party workers, etc. His book is culled from his extensive experience of meeting a variety of people; it is also a result of a rational analysis of a mind committed to secular, humane and liberal values. He realised that unless Muslim society undertakes a critical introspection of the values which inform it, there is no redemption from the backwardness which characterizes it. He persistently argued that Muslims need a renaissance to be ready to face the problems which modernity brings into its wake. Unlike a Hindu who tends to blame his *karma* for all the ills which beset him, the Muslim in India readily blames others for his problems. Neither is right, and awareness of this alone would prompt the communities to uplift themselves.

The Hindu community had a sort of renaissance in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century with the emergence of Raja Rammohan Roy. This Indian renaissance may have been fragile but nevertheless a fairly liberal and reformist strain can be discerned from Rammohan Roy to Jawaharlal Nehru. A possibility of Muslim renaissance emerged with Sir Syed Ahmed Khan's pioneering efforts to modernise Muslim community. However, Sir Syed could not free himself from the nostalgic memories of Muslim rule in India. He distrusted the Indian National Congress which he dubbed as a Hindu organization. Rammohan Roy led to Nehru; Sir Syed led to Jinnah.

Dalwai's critique of Muslim society in India was grounded in a belief in universal human values which cut across sectarian beliefs and practices. He made no attempt to convert those who had totally blind faith in what their maulvis and mullahs

told them. His constituency comprised the Muslims, particularly the young, who could clearly see that not all is right in their community. Dalwai banked on the young, educated Muslims—particularly women—who could be the harbingers of a new movement to emancipate their community. It was the Muslim Satyashodhak Mandal and the Indian Secular Society which organised the Maharashtra Muslim Conference in 1971, which was the first of its kind held in India. This was followed by a number of study camps, public meetings and petitions organised by the Muslim Satyashodhak Mandal.

Dalwai's sharp barbs directed against the Muslim orthodoxy may comfort the Hindu fundamentalists. However, they would be mistaken. Dalwai's arguments are equally applicable to the Hindu community. "I attack all aspects of medieval religious obscurantism," he wrote, "whether it is Muslim or Hindu". Dalwai died in the prime of his career as a charismatic social worker and leader. Of the many tributes paid to him when he passed away on May 3, 1977, one of them is significant. The then Minister of External Affairs, Government of India said that Hindus too needed a Dalwai. The concerned minister was Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

V.K. Sinha

An Explanatory Note

Muslim Politics in India was first published in 1968 and reprinted in 1969 by Nachiketa Publications, Mumbai. An enlarged edition was later published under the title *Muslim Politics in Secular India* by Hind Pocket Books, Delhi in 1972.

The first edition (1968) was partly based on four articles written by Dalwai for the Marathi weekly *Sadhana,* published from Pune; to these were added more articles specially written for that edition. The 1972 edition carried additional articles.

It may be a little misleading to describe the book as "translated" since there is no parallel text in Marathi comprising the entire book . The book was largely a product of numerous meetings which Hamid Dalwai had with Mr. Dilip Chitre in which the latter made extensive notes and rendered them into articles in English.

Foreword

A.B. Shah

> Men of Athens! If you were to release me on the condition that I should stop teaching the youth, I would still continue my teachings in spite of every threat that hangs over me.
>
> —Socrates

Mr Hamid Dalwai's emergence during the last two years as one of the most thought-provoking critics of Muslim attitudes marks in my opinion an important turning point in the history of Muslim politics in India. For the first time since the foundation of the Central National Mohammedan Association by Syed Ameer Ali in 1877, a Muslim student of the problem is approaching it from a standpoint that is neither Hindu nor Muslim, neither Gandhian nor Marxist. Mr Dalwai's standpoint is, rather, that of a student of history and culture, and his views are expressed with a kind of courage and forthrightness that is rare among Indian secularists. In doing so, he is aware that he is running a great personal risk. Already he has received letters threatening dire consequences, including death, for him and the members of his family, and his old parents in the Konkan have already been subjected to ostracism, including the denial of services by the village functionaries.

Why does Mr Dalwai continue taking this risk, when no educated Muslim is prepared even to court simple unpleasantness by telling his co-religionists the truths that he is convinced of ? To ask the question is, however, to answer it. It is precisely because educated Muslims prefer playing safe even though that would mean pandering to the prejudices

and superstitions of their less fortunate brethren that Mr. Dalwai is engaged in what may be called a one-man crusade against the obscurantism of Muslim society in India. Uncharitable critics are convinced that he is out to court the favour of communalist Hindus. If only these critics had read Mr Dalwai's writings in full—and they are not very voluminous as this small book shows—or discussed the question with him, perhaps they would have reacted in a different way. Not that they would have necessarily agreed with him, but a dialogue could have started between Mr Dalwai and his friends on the one hand, and their critics on the other. What has actually happened is that Mr Dalwai has stirred up a horners' nest round his head among the educated Muslims of India and their fellow-travellers among the Hindus. At the same time, those among the communalist Hindus who in the beginning imagined that they had got a Muslim recruit for fighting their battles were sorely disappointed when they discovered that Mr Dalwai was equally opposed to the obscurantism of any community and of any type. It may come as a surprise to Muslims and non-communalist Hindus that an attempt was made to break up, through stone-throwing, a public meeting that Mr Dalwai was addressing at Nagpur in October last. Mr Dalwai is satisfied that the stones did not come from Muslims.

However, perhaps it is not quite fair to blame all Mr Dalwai's Muslim critics. He has so far written in Marathi and most educated Muslims of Maharashtra, particularly those in Bombay do not know the language. Under the circumstances, they prefer to judge him on the basis of gossip and 'free' translation into English by someone who knows Marathi. Some have even passed a verdict on him on the basis of how he sits or stands in company!

I am therefore happy that the Indian Secular Forum is bringing out this authoritative version of Mr Dalwai's articles

in a language that is still the effective link language of India. The Forum also hopes to bring out or sponsor Urdu and Hindi versions of this book.

II

I shall not try to summarize Mr Dalwai's views in this foreword, for the simple reason that I am in almost total agreement with him. I would rather mention here the central point of his argument and elaborate it with a view to bringing out its significance.

Mr Dalwai's thesis is that the basic malaise of Muslim society (in India as elsewhere with the exception of Turkey and perhaps Tunisia) lies in the fact that it has never had a renaissance in its entire history of more than thirteen hundred years. All other problems, including that of its secular and democratic integration in the larger Indian society, are derivative in character. In the absence of such integration, what has come to be known as the Hindu-Muslim problem cannot be solved. However, the type of integration that is necessary here cannot be achieved unless Muslims no less than Hindus learn to separate religion from the rights and obligations of citizenship of a modern state. And only those can promote such integration who themselves are committed to the values of an open society and to the outlook on man and the universe that is sanctioned by science and scientific method. Others can at best play a passive role, if not obstruct the process of integration. If one accepts this view of the problem, one cannot help feeling that Integration Committees appointed by Governments are not likely to accomplish anything worth the name. For instance, the Committee appointed by the Government of Maharashtra includes among its members not only representatives of all political parties but also of the Majlis-e-Mushawarat, whose leaders do not believe in Hindu-Muslim co-operation for fighting communalism (see M. A. Karandikar's

letter 'Muslims & India' in *The Times of India,* Bombay, November II, 1968). Indeed, the Committee is so large—it has sixty members— that it could have easily been made completely representative by adding a Naxalite communist and a member of the R.S.S.!

It is clear that good intentions are not enough for lesser men to solve problems where one like Gandhi could not succeed. Hindu-Muslim unity and the abolition of untouchability were two of the most important elements of his programme for the freedom and regeneration of India. In a sense they were among the pre-conditions of Swaraj as he visualized it, and therefore he often described their attainment as even more important than the withdrawal of British power from India. He succeeded in considerable measure in his fight against untouchability. Though much remains to be done, no Hindu except the lunatic fringe represented by the Shankaracharya of Puri[1] would have a moment's hesitation in supporting measures designed to bring about the complete liquidation of untouchability. However, Hindu-Muslim unity evaded Gandhi throughout his active life in India except for a brief spell during the Khilafat agitation.[2] Not only that; in spite of Gandhi's ceaseless efforts the country had to accept partition as the price of freedom. And soon after Independence Gandhi had to die at the bands of a Hindu fanatic, though he alone among the leaders of the Indian National Congress was unreconciled to partition.

Why did this happen ? How was it that Gandhi who advised the Hindus to be patient and generous to the Muslims, and who asked the British to hand over power to Jinnah if they so preferred, but quit, came to be increasingly isolated not only from the Muslims but even from his own followers in his quest for unity ? And how is it that twenty-one years after partition the Hindu-Muslim problem is still with us, in the

sense that we are still groping even for a valid theoretical solution?

A satisfactory discussion of these questions would require an examination of Gandhi's philosophy of life, his theory of social change and, most important of all, the nature of the Hindu and Islamic traditions and the types of mind that they mould. All this cannot be undertaken in the space of a foreword and must wait for a later date. Here I shall only deal with some of these questions and that, too, to the extent that is necessary for indicating the lines on which further discussion may usefully proceed.

III

Gandhi was essentially a philosophical anarchist in his view of man and did not subscribe to the idea of original sin. On the contrary, he believed that man was 'essentially' good, for every human being had a spark of the divine in him and no one was beyond redemption even though the struggle for self-realization was bound to be arduous and long. He therefore approached the problem of Hindu-Muslim unity as a well-meaning, persuasive, non-sectarian nationalist. He worked on the assumption, based on his experience in South Africa, that if only Hindus and Muslims could be brought together in joint constructive endeavour, they would see that unity was in their common interest and learn to live together in peace and harmony. To this end he sought to project the universal human values preached by all major religions including Hinduism and Islam, and hoped that in the course of time the forces of unity would triumph over those of separatism. For, according to Gandhi's way of thinking, 'true' religion could only join, not keep separate, men of different faiths. If Hindus and Muslims in India regarded themselves as essentially separate groups the fault, Gandhi thought, lay not in the beliefs and practices enjoined by their scriptures but in a defective understanding of their 'real' message.

This is a noble view of man and religion. But it overlooks the fact that man, as a product of evolution, is a union of good and evil, just as it overlooks the historically determined character of his culture and institutions. Consequently, Gandhi missed the deeper socio-historical and cultural roots of the religious conflict in India. Instead, he attributed its origin to the wily British, who certainly were interested in keeping the Muslims away from the 'seditious' and 'Hindu' nationalist movement.[3] Gandhi was satisfied that if only there were enough goodwill on the part of a sufficient number of Hindus and Muslims, sooner or later they would realize the suicidal implications of religious conflict and work together for the attainment of freedom from foreign rule. This approach, which I would call the *Rama-Rahim* approach because it postulated the peaceful coexistence of Hindus and Muslims without any fundamental modification of their attitude to religion, was bound to fail. It did not take into account the hold that religion with its dogma, tradition, custom and ritual has on the minds of men in a pre-modern society. Also, it presupposed that the logic of individual or small-group behaviour could be applied to huge, faceless masses whose only common bond is blind loyalty to a tribal collectivity in the sacred name of God and religion.

This is another way of saying that the Gandhian approach was saintly in the main. It was also akin to the Marxist, in the sense that it assigned a derivative role to the cultural factor. Gandhi believed that the urge for freedom would enable the Muslims to take an enlightened view of their religion. This, however, presupposes that a certain measure of individuation has already taken place in the culture system know as Islam, and Gandhi assumed that it had. The Hindu mind is essentially individualistic, indeed narcissistic[4], so that it is easy for it to transcend intermediate loyalties and take to the path

of individual salvation. This has its disadvantages as well as advantages, and perhaps the former outweigh the latter. The point is that it is difficult for a Hindu to visualize, except by a special effort of reason and the imagination, a mind that is almost totally lacking in the conception of the individual and derives the significance of human life solely from the individual's membership of a collectivity. This, however, seems to be a characteristic feature of almost all cultures based on revealed religion. If Christian culture appears to be different in this respect, that is because almost from its inception Christianity was influenced by the Greek tradition. It was the revival of the Greek tradition that led to the Renaissance and the rise of Protestantism with its stress on personal interpretation of the Holy Writ. The humanization of Christianity, with the consequent growth of a secular conception of individuality, was thus a direct outcome of its interaction with the Greek tradition.[5] It is worth noting in this connection that unlike the People of the Book, the Greeks were not blessed with a prophet nor, unlike the Hindus, with an incarnation of God. They had therefore to rely on reason and observation alone for discovering the nature of things. Also, they were polytheists and their gods were hardly distinguishable from human beings with superhuman powers but entirely non-transcendental interests. Consequently, the Greeks could develop a tradition of critical inquiry and a climate of tolerance necessary to let 'a hundred schools contend' and 'a hundred flowers bloom'. They had also another advantage. They had no counterpart of the Vedas, which the Hindus regarded as eternal and uncreated by man. Unlike the Hindus, they were therefore free from the burden of unchanging Truth and able to create science as quest and the idea of scientific method as providing a tool of inquiry as well as a criterion for the validity of its findings.

The Greek tradition might have had a similar effect on

Islam too. But by the time Islam came in contact with it—in the reign of al-Mamun (813-833)—the latter had already lost its elan and Islam too had outgrown its formative stage. More important still, Islam arose in a society that was riven with inter-tribal feuds, had no state worth the name and did not hesitate to subject dissent to crude tribal persecution. The founder of Islam had therefore also to found a state before its message was fully delivered, let alone developed in contact with a more advanced culture without the arbitration of force. The rapid and spectacular expansion of Islam during the hundred years following the death of the Prophet over the stagnant and often decadent societies of the surrounding region also had an inhibitory effect on its future development. For continued victory over others strengthened the Muslim's conviction that his faith was not only perfect but superior to others and its doctrine, infallible. Dissent, when it arose, was as ruthlessly put down in Islam as in mediaeval Christianity, so that even the finest and most courageous of Muslim scholars were careful to avoid saying anything that might appear as questioning the fundamental tenets of the faith. Thus the Mutazilites, who made use of Greek ideas in the exposition and defence of Islamic theological doctrine, 'were regarded as heretical by the main body of Sunnite Muslims'[6] and were treated as such. Even Ibn Sina, one of the few really great Muslim philosophers, was critized by authorities of the Muslim tradition for 'limiting the power of God to a predetermined logical structure' and for 'diminishing the sense of awe of the finite before the infinite'.[7] Nor is that all. Ibn Sina himself in his later years seems to have turned—or posed as—a devout gnostic. Indeed, 'it comes as something of a shock to be confronted with the thickening web of "irrational" elements in the writings of such a personality as Avicenna'.[8]

I have deliberately dwelt at some length on this aspect of

Islam as a cultural tradition. The reason is not that Islam is unique in its record of intolerance in the past; it is, rather, that Islam still exhibits the same intolerance of free inquiry and dissent as it did in less enlightened times.[9] What little possibility there might have been of the softening of this attitude through the development of science and philosophy after the mutual persecution of the Mutazilites and their orthodox opponents was effectively destroyed by al-Ghazali (d. 1,111) for centuries to come. His work ensured that no renaissance would ever take place in Muslim society unless, as in Turkey, it were imposed from above. Muslim scholars look upon al-Ghazali as the greatest thinker that Islamic culture has produced. I am inclined to believe that he was the greatest disaster that befell it since the death of the Prophet.

So great has been the hold of orthodoxy on the Muslim mind that nowhere has Muslim society so far been able to throw up an articulate class of liberal Muslims committed to modern values and all that such a commitment means in various fields of life. Such a class can alone subject the tradition of Islam to a critical scrutiny and prepare the ground for the entry of Muslim society into the modern age. For, as the experience of developing countries in the post-War period shows, efforts to modernize the political and economic systems in the absence of social and cultural modernization accompanying, if not preceding, them can only result in frustration or perversion.

That the issue is basic to the future of Muslim society is illustrated by the still unresolved conflict, characteristic of almost the entire Muslim world, between the conception of territorial .nationalism and that of a politico-religious *ummat* that cuts across national boundaries. The repeated attempts of the Muslim Brotherhood to assassinate President Nasser in the name of Islam merely show that the conflict cannot be

resolved until the very ethos of Islamic culture undergoes a qualitative change. To initiate a process that would bring about such a transformation is the historic task confronting educated Muslims everywhere in the world. There are signs of this happening in some of the countries—Pakistan, for example—where Muslims have to face the responsibility of running the state.

However, there are serious difficulties in their path, not the least of which is the self-contradictory situation in which politicians generally find themselves by trying to eat their cake and have it too. At home the demands of development often compel them to adopt policies, such as family planning and drastic modification of personal law, which cannot but provoke the wrath of the orthodox. At the same time, they do not hesitate to rouse and exploit the religious passions of their people when it suits their convenience, especially in international politics. Duplicity of this kind may prove useful for the time being but the price it exacts in the long run is likely to be out of all proportion to the gains. For instance, it inhibits the growth of genuinely critical, as distinguished from pedantic and apologetic, scholarship. The latter type of scholarship, of which there is enough in the Muslim world, is generally sterile, if not positively harmful, from the standpoint of modernization. It is only the critical spirit that can release the springs of creativity and wash away the debris of centuries.

The tragedy of Indian Muslims does not lie so much in the backwardness of a vast majority of them in relation to the Hindus—which is only a symptom—as in the unwillingness of educated Muslims to undertake a critical reappraisal of their heritage. The cost would be insignificant compared to what it would be in a country under Muslim rule, or what their Hindu counterparts had to pay in the preceding century. But the consciousness of a separate identity or the desire to conform is

unbelievably strong among them. For instance, even an eminent scholar like Professor M. Mujeeb finds it advisable to begin an otherwise magnificent work with the following obeisance to orthodoxy: 'It is the author's firm belief that the Indian Muslims have, in their religion of Islam, and in the true [sic] representatives of the moral and spiritual values of Islam the most reliable standards of judgement, and they do not need to look elsewhere to discover how high or low they stand'.[10] This is very much reminiscent of Hindu pandits of the past, who began their treatises with an invocation to God regardless of whether in subsequent pages they were to deal with logic or mathematics, statecraft or erotics.

IV

If Gandhi was guilty of the saint's fallacy and educated Muslims of excessive group-consciousness or desire to conform, the Marxists were guilty of over-simplification and false induction. They sought to interpret Hindu-Muslim relations in terms of economic interests and the machinations of the British. Gandhi as well as the Marxists assumed that the Muslim masses, as distinguished from their upper-class leadership, had at heart the same political and economic interests as their Hindu counterparts. They therefore concluded that as the struggle against political and economic injustice gathered momentum, the basis of Hindu-Muslim conflict would gradually be undermined. And once freedom was established and justice was on the march, the two communities would, it was hoped, begin to live in friendship and peace. In this perspective no critical examination of religion as a socio-cultural institution, let alone a frontal attack on some of the values and attitudes it sanctified, was considered necessary by either group.

That Gandhi should not have seen the need for such criticism is easy to understand. What is surprising is the

attitude of those who swore by Marx. For the left arose as a standard-bearer of enlightenment and was as much a protest against religious obscurantism as against exploitation in the secular field. It is true that Indian Marxists were unsparing in their criticism of Hindu obscurantism. But that was relatively easy in view of the rather amorphous nature of Hinduism and the tradition of critical self-inquiry started by the reformers of the nineteenth century. There was no such tradition in Muslim society nor was there a large enough class of liberal, forward-looking Muslims which, like its Hindu counter-part in the preceding century, could initiate such a tradition. Consequently, Islam escaped the humanizing process through which Christianity in the West and, to a certain extent, Hinduism in India had to pass. Inspired by considerations that were primarily political, the Marxists no less than the Gandhians missed the true nature of the role that the doctrine and tradition of Islam played in the evolution of Muslim politics in India. Gandhi made Khilafat a national cause in order to win the confidence of Indian Muslims. The Marxists were not particularly impressed by Gandhi's support of the Khilafat agitation. But they too dared not criticise Muslim communalism except in political terms, whereas what was required was a thorough-going critique of the philosophy and sociology of Islam of the type that Marx considered 'the beginning of all criticism.' Even M. N. Roy, who alone among Indian Marxists subjected Hinduism to such an analysis, failed in this respect.

It is here that Mr Dalwai is breaking new ground, though in an indirect way. His interest in the non-religious aspects of Islam stems from his concern over the problem of Hindu-Muslim relations and its bearing on our effort to develop a modern and liberal society in India. He therefore does not deal with religion as such, or with Islam as a religion, except

insofar as religion is used as a cloak for obscurantist and anti-humanist ends. It may therefore be useful to consider here in brief the process by which all religions come to be so used and defeat the inspiration of their founders.

Every religion offers to its followers a vision of life and a theory that incorporates this vision. In the history of every religion, however, a stage arrives when the vision fades into the background except for a socially ineffective minority, and the theory achieves an absolute status unrelated to the historical situation in which it first arose. When this happens religion proves a fetter on human freedom and creativity, superstition triumphs over science, and ethics itself is perverted into a specious justification of social inequities. Medieval Christianity and Hinduism from classical times to the early years of the nineteenth century provide ample evidence for this view. The Renaissance humanized Christianity and Hinduism too underwent a partial but significant change of the same type in the nineteenth century. However, Islam still awaits its renaissance, and till it takes place Muslim society cannot be modernized nor can Muslims be integrated into a modern secular society, regardless of whether it is liberal or authoritarian.

The problem of Hindu-Muslim unity thus appears as an aspect of the larger problem of the modernization of Indian society. For, given the composition, past history and present context of this society, it would be unrealistic to imagine that the Hindu and the Muslim can live together as equal citizens unless each were willing to dissociate his political from his religious or cultural identity. For historical and other reasons, the Hindu is at an advantage in this respect. But precisely because of that, he has to accept the onus of promoting the modernization of Muslim society. So far, he has defaulted on this responsibility, apparently out of expediency but mainly

because his own understanding of the task of modernization has been superficial and imitative. Consequently, well-meaning Hindus in public life have generally been soft-headed secularists in relation to Muslim society. Over the years their attitude has seriously damaged not only the cause of democratic secular integration but also the interests of Muslims themselves. It has created a vested interest in obscurantism, and encourages among educated Muslims a tendency to self-pity of the Mock Turtle kind instead of facilitating the emergence of a secular and forward-looking Muslim leadership. Worse still, in reaction to the persistent refusal, in the name of religion, of the spokesmen of Muslim society to meet the demands of the modern conscience and the requirements of the modern age, a growing number of well-meaning Hindus are rallying under the banner of Hindu revivalism. Indeed, if the present trend continues unchecked, in a few years from now most politically articulate Hindus and Muslims will be confronting each other from platforms like those of the R.S.S. and the Jamaat-e-Islami. One need not worry about their fate—indeed, I would say to them: 'a plague on both your houses I' But an over-whelming majority of the people of this country, be they Hindu or Muslim, are entitled to a more decent society and its chances would suffer a great set-back. That is why Mr Dalwai pleads that those who speak in the name of secularism and democracy should refuse to have any truck with obscurantist groups claiming to represent the interests of Muslims even if it means the loss of the Muslim votes for some years to come. There are enough secular-minded Muslims, mostly of the younger generation, who would like to establish rapport with their Hindu counterparts. They feel alienated from the bulk of their community and also from the Hindus because of the latter's narcissistic attitude and short-sighted opportunism. Let secular Hindus seek them out and give them a sense of

belonging, not as Hindus or Muslims but as fellow-citizens engaged in building an open society in India.

I do not know to what extent Mr Dalwai will succeed in persuading educated Muslims of the older generation to look upon his approach with sympathy. But I know from personal observation that he has succeeded in striking a chord in the hearts of younger Muslims, who seem to be groping for new moorings in post-partition Indian society. I also know that he has been able to give well-meaning Hindus, particularly the idealistically motivated members of the younger generation, a feeling that Hindu revivalism is no way of meeting the challenge of Muslim obscurantism. That also explains why those who believe that India should become a Hindu Rashtra have started having second thoughts about him. And if the younger generation of Hindus, who constitute nearly eighty-five per cent of the population of this country, can be prevented from turning obscurantist, what others think of Mr Dalwai is of little consequence for the future of secularism in India.

NOTES:

1. In April 1968 during a *Gita Pravachan* week at Ahmedabad the Shankaracharya defended the organizers' arrangements for segregating Harijans from the caste Hindus in the audience. *cf.* also his views expressed in *Kalyan* (Hindi), October, November 1967.
2. And the Muslim inspiration behind this short-lived unity was not that of secular territorial nationalism but of an extra-territorial loyalty based on religion. For some interesting sidelights on this question, *cf.* Ram Gopal, *Indian Muslims*, Asia Publishing House, Bombay 1959, 1964.
3. *cf.* Ram Gopal, *op. cit.*, and Bal Gangadhar Tilak, *Articles from 'Kesari* (Marathi), vol. I, Kesari-Maratha Sanstha, Poona 1922 for evidence from late nineteenth and early twentieth century records and examples of British policy of *divide et impera.*
4. *cf.* P. Spratt, *Hindu Culture and Personality,* P. C. Manaktala and Sons, Bombay 1966. See also, 'Tradition and Modernity in India' in A. B. Shah, *Planning for Democracy and Other Essays.* P. C. Manaktala and Sons, Bombay 1967.
5. A secular attitude to the state was, during its early years, indispensable for Christianity to survive in the hostile atmosphere of a well-established

Roman state. What the Renaissance did was to revive this attitude and to extend it from the state to the individual. It would be interesting to speculate on the lines along which Christianity would have developed if, like Muhammad, Jesus too had founded a state.

6. W. Montgomery Watt, *What ii Islam?* Longmans, London 1968, p. 181, *cf.* also G. E. von Grunebaum, *Medieval Islam,* (2nd edn), Chicago 1953, pp. 102-105.
7. Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *An Introduction to Islamic Cosmological Doctrines,* Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass. 1964, p. 214.
8. H. A. R. Gibb in the *Preface* to S. H. Nasr, *op. cit.*
9. *cf.*, for instance, the recent resignation of Dr. Fazl Rahman from his post as Director of the Pakistan Government's Institute of Islamic Studies as a result of the *ulema's* wrath against him.
10. " M. Mujeeb, *The Indian Muslims,* George Alien & Unwin Ltd, London 1967, p. 24.

❐❐❐

Historical Background

For the last few years I have been writing and speaking in public on the Hindu-Muslim communal problem in India. My analysis of the problem has had a mixed reception. Now that I am publishing my articles in the form of a book, I would like to explain my views in some detail to my readers—both Hindu and Muslim. And I also have to make an appeal to them.

It is obvious why the Muslim reaction to my views should be as adverse as it is. It is also understandable why the Hindus have generally welcomed my views, although there are some Hindus who believe that my articles and speeches are aimed at confusing them.

Although the Muslims have generally reacted adversely to my views, there is some variation in their positions. Among my critics are some who had opposed the creation of Pakistan. However, the reason why they were opposed to the partitioning of the Indian sub-continent was that they dreamt of converting the whole of India into *Dar-ul-Islam.* Therefore, now that Pakistan has already been created, their efforts are directed towards merging the rest of India with that Islamic state.

On the other hand, there are Indian Muslims who are being modernized gradually. At present, such Muslims are few and they are confused. They have doubts and anxieties about their future, and they are worried about the security of the Muslim community itself in India. Being in doubt and feeling insecure, these Muslims oppose any new and different approach to the communal problem in India. They imagine that the security of Indian Muslims lies in clinging to the traditional

structure of Indian society. In short, they believe that if Muslims were to have any place in Indian life they should remain exactly as they are today. Hence even such Muslims are opposed to my views.

Of these two broad types of Indian Muslims who find my views unpalatable, I would not attempt to initiate a dialogue with those who dream of converting India to Islam and of merging it ultimately with Pakistan. If these people believe that it is their duty to convert all Indians to Islam by whatever means they can think of, they are the exact counterpart of those extremist Hindus who similarly wish to liquidate all Indian Muslims even if it involved mass extermination. I come from the Muslim community and yet I cannot entirely blame the extremist Hindu communalists. Whereas the extremist Muslim communalists have aggressive plans to destroy the Hindu community, the extremist Hindus, in reaction to them, want to eliminate the Muslims in self-defence. Thus I view extremist Hindu communalism as a reaction to Muslim communalism. Unless Muslim communalism is eliminated, Hindu communalism will not disappear. At the same time, one has to bear in mind that extremist Muslim communalists are so much obsessed by their grand dream of converting the whole of India to Islam that no argument at present will effect any change in their attitude. Their grand dream has to terminate in a grand disillusionment first. They must become aware of the fact that their efforts are foredoomed to failure and their objectives are unattainable. Today, they cannot be made aware of the futility of their ambition and hence my appealing to them would serve no useful purpose.

However, I believe it to be my duty to appeal to those Indian Muslims who are confused and therefore still uncertain in their approach to the communal problem in India. They are misguided and, therefore, they are communalist. To initiate

a dialogue with them and to make them aware of an alternative approach to the problem will be helpful. Wherever I travel in India, I meet local Muslims and try to discuss the issue with them. I keep an open mind: for they may have some genuine problems and difficulties. I try to understand them. Sometimes, I succeed; sometimes, I fail. Generally, old and tradition-bound Muslims uniformly oppose my views. Often, they boycott my public meetings or have them cancelled. However, the young Muslims I meet at such discussions do not greet my views with the hostility shown by the older generation. This does not, however, mean that they agree with me on all points. But neither do they agree with their elders. I have always felt that these younger Muslims are struggling to free themselves from the shackles of rigid, orthodox thinking. My appeal is addressed to them.

Even the younger generation of Indian Muslims imagine that it is the Hindus who are responsible for all their problems and difficulties. They often ask me why I single out Muslim communalism for criticism. It is true that even Hindus are communal-minded. And it is wrong to say that I have kept silent about Hindus communalism while criticizing Muslim communalism in India. I have been ceaselessly criticizing the movement for a ban on cow-slaughter. However, when I criticize Hindu communalist trends I do not criticize the Hindus as such. Nor is it the purpose of my criticism to ensure that Muslims are able to eat beef. That would be a naive way of looking at the problem. My criticism of the movement for a ban on cow slaughter is from the agricultural and economic point of view. I believe that such a ban would adversely affect two major national interests: the development of Indian agriculture and hence of the Indian economy. Similarly, when I criticize certain Muslim attitudes, I criticize them in the context of broad national interests which should

be the concern of all Indians regardless of their religious faith. I do not criticize Muslims as such.

It is an old habit of Indian Muslims to blame Hindus for their woes. However, the Indian Muslim intelligentsia has never really been critically introspective. It has not sought to relate its problems to its own attitudes. It has not developed a self-searching, self-critical attitude. Compared to the Hindus, the Indian Muslims accepted Western education rather late. As a consequence, the Muslims remained comparatively backward in several fields. The real cause of Muslim backwardness is found in the Muslim opposition to educational reform during the early days of British rule in India. Behind this view was a peculiar sense of resentment. Muslims in India believed that the British snatched away from their predecessors what was a Muslim Empire. When Sir Syed Ahmed Khan urged Muslims to accept modern Western education the *ulema* of Deoband came out with the *fatwa* that Sir Syed was a *kafir*. How can one blame the Hindus for this?

Muslims remained backward because they were religion-bound revivalists who refused to modernize themselves. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan in this light appears as a great visionary who heralded the Indian Muslim renaissance. It was due to his great efforts that the rigidly religious mind of Indian Muslims began to show the first signs of a thaw. Educared Muslims began to redefine life in terms of the modern age. They gave up the grand dream of converting India to Islam. This was the beginning of a great upheaval among educated Indian Muslims. A process of transformation had begun. It was this process that should have brought Muslims close to Hindus and broadened their view of man and society. The trend of this process was toward a view according to which Hindus and Muslims would have been looked upon as equals.

This process was, however, ironically reversed because

modern Indian Muslims proved unequal to the task. Their modernity proved limited and they lacked the broad vision that could have ensured the complete success of the Aligarh renaissance. Ironically, this very process separated the Muslims from the Hindus instead of bringing them closer together. The old Muslim habit of blaming the Hindus for their problems reappeared and was set more firmly than ever. Although Sir Syed Ahmed Khan was free from the vice of religious fanaticism, he lacked the virtue of being free from the atavistic vanity of inheritor of the Moghul past. In this very period, when it was possible for a national consciousness to emerge, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan himself succumbed to the egoistic conception that Muslims were the conquerors of India. It was he who was the father of separatist Muslim nationalism, and not Jinnah as it is erroneously supposed. Jinnah is only a later version of Sir Syed, revised and enlarged. Thus the aberrant modern Muslim himself was responsible first for a separatist Muslim nationalism and later for the creation of Pakistan. The foundation of Muslim nationalism is the postulate that Hindu and Muslim societies are autonomous and parallel social structures.

It is no fault of the Hindus that the Indian Muslims embraced this theory of a separate Muslim nationalism. Nor is it the fault of the Hindus that Indian Muslims regarded Hindus in Pakistan as hostages ensuring their own (Indian Muslims') security in India. It is only once in a while that an individual or a society gets an opportunity to make or mar its own future. The Muslims lost their rare chance of embracing modernity simultaneously with the Hindus when they yielded to the pressure exerted on them by the *ulema* of Deoband and rejected English education. History gave them another chance a little later—the opportunity to strengthen Indian nationalism by joining forces with the Hindus. But they let

go even this opportunity by succumbing to the erroneous notion that Hindu and Muslim societies were autonomous and parallel social structures. They paid scant heed even to geographical realities and refused to consider where they lived and would live in the future. The problems faced by Indian Muslims today can be traced back to these two lost opportunities. If a chance that comes only once in a century is wasted, it takes another century to make up for the loss.

It is high time now that younger Muslims became critically introspective and learnt the nature of their own mistakes. It is a tragic fact that there does not yet exist a class of critically introspective young Muslims in India. A society which puts the blame on the Hindus for its own communalism can hardly be called introspective. If Hindu communalism is responsible for Muslim communalism, by the same logic it would follow that Muslim communalism is equally responsible for Hindu communalism. The truth of the matter is that the Muslim intelligentsia has not yet given up its postulate of parallel society. It has still not learnt to separate religion from politics. Their idea of religious freedom is merely that the structure of the Muslim society in India should remain unaltered. Basically, they are still 'Muslim nationalists'. They have not accepted the modern concept of nationalism, and hence their attempts to preserve Muslim nationalist trends in the present structure of the Indian polity. There is a curious collusion between these Indian Muslims and the others who envisage the conversion of India to Islam. This is precisely what brings Maulana Abul Hasan Nadvi of the Jamaat-e-Islami and Dr Faridi of the Majlis-e-Mashawarat together on the same platform.

These are the two broad trends one discerns among Indian Muslims today. One group has taken its inspiration from Shah Waliullah and the other regards Sir Syed Ahmed Khan as its mentor and pioneer. Today it is necessary to reject both. The

Hindus too had similar trends; they exist even today. But the Hindus also had a liberal humanist tradition. Nehru kept this tradition alive; Gandhi was a symbol of this same great tradition. That the Indian Muslim community could not produce a Gandhi underscores its failure. Only the North-West Frontier Province could produce a great man like Abdul Ghaffar Khan. But it is significant, though not difficult to understand, that Indian Muslims did not respond to him.

Will the younger generation of Indian Muslims face this challenge? This is their third, and perhaps last, chance to liberate and modernize themselves. If they avail themselves of it, they can still make up for the loss the Muslim community has suffered by wasting the two previous opportunities to create a tradition of modern, enlightened liberalism. The only effective answer to the problems of Indian Muslims would involve on their part a total rejection of the prejudices of history. Only when they rid themselves of the misconceptions that history and tradition produce can they arrive at the conception of a free, modern mind committed only to fundamental human values. The chapters which follow are an attempt in that direction. I would earnestly appeal to my young Muslim readers to give them serious, critical consideration.

I would also like to make a similar request to my Hindu readers. Several Hindu friends have welcomed the attempts of persons like me to modernize the Muslim community in India. However, there is a class of Hindus which views with suspicion any Muslim's attempt to transform the consciousness of the community. This does not surprise me. The motives of even a man of Gandhi's stature were suspiciously viewed by a vast number of Indian Muslims. In such a situation, it is but inevitable that a number of Hindus would suspect the motives of an ordinary man like me. It would scarcely be worth the trouble to try to convince them of my *bona fides*. However,

there are some Hindus who view Muslim society as a society which, like any other, can be transformed in the course of time. My appeal is addressed to such Hindus. I urge them to accept the facts of the situation first: there is no class of thoroughly secular Muslims in India today. At the same time the idea of a common Indian nationality requires that Muslim society be integrated in the fabric of a secular Indian society. The only way in which this can be achieved is by first creating a small class of modern, liberal and secular Muslims. This is precisely what people like me are attempting to do. Personally, I believe that no religion can provide the foundation for an ideal society. It follows that neither Islam nor Hinduism can be the basis of an ideal social order. Several people ask me where precisely I differ from communal Hindus. It should be fairly obvious now where I differ from them and how radical the differences are. However, I agree with them on certain points and it would be worthwhile to demarcate clearly the area of agreement between us. I agree with them that Muslim communalism is a strong force in this country at present. I also agree with them that in this nation minorities have a claim to equal rights and equal opportunities but they should not have a claim to special status or privileges. I also agree with them that Kashmir is a part of India and that every Pakistani aggression on Indian soil must be answered by a strong counter-attack. Finally, I agree with the communalist Hindu's view that Pakistan was not the last demand of the Muslims of this sub-continent. Even today, both among Indian Muslims and among the rulers of Pakistan, there are influential groups whose last demand would be the conversion of the whole of India to Islam.

However, I consider suicidal the Hindu communalist attempt to answer Muslim communalism by obscurantist Hindu revivalism. Muslim communalism will be defeated only

when the Hindu achieves a greater degree of social progress and modernizes himself. By making the Hindus more obscurantist—by making them more puritan and orthodox—Muslim communalism can never be eliminated. The movement for a ban on cow-slaughter provides an apt example. I oppose the ban on agro-economic grounds. But I oppose it even more strongly on non-economic grounds, because if the Hindu belief in the sacredness of the cow is encouraged, it would prevent the Hindus from modernizing themselves and from achieving a greater degree of social progress. The Hindus have slid backward only because of their religious obscurantism. Mahmud Ghazanvi could defeat Hindu armies simply by using herds of cows as a shield for his own army! One hopes that such history will not be repeated in modern times. Hindus must discard all those religious beliefs which hindered their progress and deprived them of their freedom. I say this as a friend of the Hindus and not as an antagonist. No Muslim communalist will object to Hindu obscurantism for the reasons I give here, simply because no Muslim communalist ever wishes that Hindu society should become modern and dynamic. As a matter of fact, to protect their own medieval obscurantist beliefs, the Muslims would find it convenient that the Hindus also remained medieval-minded religious puritans. I attack all aspects of medieval religious obscurantism whether it is Muslim or Hindu. And hence I am opposed to the movement for a ban on cow-slaughter. Eighty-five per cent of the population of this country is Hindu and therefore the progress of this nation depends on the Hindus becoming dynamic, modern and advanced. And I want this nation to be advanced, powerful and prosperous because my individual future is inextricably tied up with it. I would go even further and tell the communalist Hindus that they cannot free Muslims from the shackles of their own obscurantist beliefs if the Hindus

themselves remain religion-bound. To modernize Indian Muslims, Hindus must first strengthen the forces of modernization among themselves. When Indian Muslims are shocked out of their slumber by the advancement and modernization of Hindu society, a similar process will start in Muslim society and that would help the efforts of persons like me.

Hindu communalists should not continue to make the tragic blunder of mistaking every Muslim for a communalist. It is true that today it is difficult to find a thoroughly secular Muslim in India. But if we want secular-minded Muslims in the near future, we must encourage and support those Muslims who are already stepping in that direction. One can cite numerous cases where the Hindus can and ought to support certain Muslims by acknowledging the worth of their efforts. For example, Mr Sadiq is making sincere and systematic efforts in Kashmir to free Kashmiri Muslims from the hold that Sheikh Abdullah has on their minds. It would also be honest to admit that the Health Minister of Maharashtra, Dr Rafiq Zakaria is making sincere efforts to propagate family planning among Indian Muslims. I mention this particularly because the communalist Hindu, in his zeal to condemn all Muslims as communalists, weakens the emerging liberal and modern forces among the Muslims. Indian Muslims will change only when they begin to present a differentiated picture in their thoughts and their view of society. Hindus would also benefit from such differentiation among the Muslims. For as long as the Muslims remain monolithic in their thinking, their communalism will become increasingly awesome. If they divide into two camps, the modern liberals and the orthodox puritans, their communalism would be much weakened. I suggest that communalist Hindus, and particularly the younger Hindus, should pause and consider this.

History, which has bred prejudices and animosity, is a

hindrance to all of us. All of us have to come out of the grip of our prejudices which originate in our past. Hindu communalists must also break away from the grip of their prejudices. It is not the fault of the young Brahmins of today that their ancestors gave inhuman treatment to the untouchables, and today's Indian Muslim is not responsible for the oppression to which Mahmud Ghaznavi or Aurangzeb subjected the Hindus. Fortunately, there is a class of Hindus today which bears the burden of its ancestors' sins and conscientiously tries to undo the damage by embracing social equality as a fundamental value. Similarly, there has to emerge a class of Muslims which would accept the sins of Aurangzeb and, to undo the damage, would therefore embrace the concept of secular citizenship. The emergence and sustained growth of such a class of modern, secular dynamic liberals is the only effective answer to the Hindu-Muslim communal problem. And therefore, my appeal to communal Hindus is that they should free themselves from historical prejudices before they examine the views expressed by me in the chapters that follow.

□□□

Reading the Mind of Indian Muslims

The previous chapter was a brief review of the problem of Indian Muslims and its solution. I have described the symptoms of a disease and outlined its treatment without naming the disease as such. One of the reasons for doing so was to focus attention on certain aspects of the problem at the very outset. I also wanted to show how certain pitfalls cannot be avoided when one begins to discuss a problem from the end to the beginning. My main reason, however, was to invite my Muslim friends to do some necessary critical introspection so that they might start the discussion in a frank and systematic manner.

It is my experience that the arguments of Muslim leaders always sound like the arguments of defence attorneys in a court of law. In a court of law the lawyer's sole interest is to win his case. The argument is addressed to a judge, who is a third party and who gives his verdict in the end. If a lawyer defending an alleged murderer argues the defendant's case effectively, his client is acquitted even if he in fact is a murderer. The sole emphasis in this kind of argument is on convincing the judge. Muslim leaders in India argue much in the same manner. One does not know whether they expect some judge to give a favourable verdict in the end. For instance, most Muslim leaders in India advance the odd argument that Muslims were not responsible for partition, and even argue that Hindus alone were responsible for it. Of course, there can be different arguments as to who really was more responsible for partition, but it is factually wrong to suggest that Muslims were not responsible for partitioning the sub-continent. When Muslims

say this, they do not want to claim merely that they were not responsible for partition. Their claim is much larger; they want to claim that it was not the Muslims who demanded the partitioning of the sub-continent.

History provides some clues to the strange behaviour and arguments of Indian Muslim leaders. Indian Muslims always tried to impose their own demands on Hindus with the help of the British, who were a third party in the position of a judge. It was enough for the Muslims to have presented effective arguments to the British. If one recalls the entire history of the efforts made to solve the Hindu-Muslim problem, one can easily verify this. It was Muslim leaders who obstinately held that the Hindus should not be granted freedom unless Muslim demands were met. When they saw that the judgment in this dispute was to be given by a third party, they tried to tilt the balance in their own favour even by resorting to an unscrupulous and fallacious argument, and the Hindus who were eager for independence conceded their demand. It is not important to discuss how the third party arrived at its verdict. The important thing is to remember the historical fact that the Muslims got their verdict from a third party. They never even paused to consider that the real decision was to be taken by the Muslims themselves in collaboration with the Hindu majority. They looked at the dispute as if it was a matter of litigation and could never think of the possibility of a compromise.

In short, Indian Muslims committed the most grievous sin of obstructing the movement for Indian independence. They took undue advantage of the presence of a third party. They refused to arrive at a compromise with the Hindus. Muslims in the entire sub-continent were responsible for this. But there is an important difference between Indian and Pakistani Muslims. Muslims in Pakistan did not have to face the consequences of this wrong-headed agitation. In fact, if

the agitation were to succeed, it would be of benefit to them. And therefore, it must be said that Pakistani Muslims deliberately took a wrong step, the consequences of which were to be suffered by Muslims who were to remain in India.

But Indian Muslims have committed an even worse sin. They not only relied on a third party but also participated in a movement which aimed at creating a separate nation comprising all provinces which had a Muslim majority. In short, in order to solve their own problems, Indian Muslims as a whole came to an understanding with the British as well as with the Muslim majority provinces; and they refused to make any compromise with the Hindus.

What was the nature of this understanding? To solve our problems, argued the Muslims in the sub-continent, a sovereign and independent state comprising provinces with a Muslim majority had to be created. In this new state Hindus should be in a minority. That way only, they further argued, would Muslims in India have security. This argument is known as the hostage theory. In the middle ages the cruel and inhuman practice of holding human beings as hostages was quite common. It is tragic that Muslims in the sub-continent resorted to this old practice to solve their problem.

But the interesting thing is that while Pakistan needed some Hindus at least as hostages, she did not even keep a sizeable number of them in her territory though the subcontinent was partitioned only because Muslims decided to experiment with the theory of hostages. At that time, several observers had warned that this theory would create a problem of minorities in both India and Pakistan and that in both countries politics would be centered on vengeance wrecked on the minorities. A prominent Muslim intellectual had issued this warning in a book published before partition. Shaukatulla Ansari, at present Governor of Orissa, in his *Pakistan—A Problem of India* published in 1944, has made a very significant observation. He predicted that if the sub-continent were to be partitioned, it would be partitioned in an atmosphere of bitter hostility which would last for generations and would be difficult to eliminate. All of us are witness to the accuracy of his prophecy.

Muslims in India agreed to remain in India as hostages in accordance with the theory propounded by the Muslim League. Why should Indian Muslims complain about it now? Do they say now that this entire theory was wrong? No; their only complaint is that Hindus have started implementing the theory. They are not worried whether Hindus are themselves unhappy about the theory. Their only demand is that the theory should not affect themselves. All Muslim leaders, following the theory, demand that there should be no anti-Muslim riots in India. If one asked them any question about the fate of Hindus in Pakistan, they would dismiss it. I have already observed that among Indian Muslims there still is no liberal class whose members would take an honest and just view of things. It is sufficient for Muslim leaders in India to argue that Hindus in Pakistan .are not treated in an unjust manner. If one points to instances of injustice done to Hindus in Pakistan, Indian Muslim leaders have a ready answer. They would say that it is a problem of Pakistan with which they are hardly concerned. On the other hand, they would criticize the questioner for raising an issue which has to do with Pakistan and not with themselves.

The question which arises here is: Why do Indian Muslims make the obviously false claim that Pakistani Hindus are treated with due justice? And why did Indian Muslims earlier refuse to rely on the conscience of Hindus to get full justice for themselves? I shall begin with the first question. Those who claim that Hindus in Pakistan get due justice assume that this

entire problem is still a case pending trial in a court. They still imagine, perhaps quite honestly but no doubt unrealistically, that if they argue forcefully enough there still is a third party to give them a verdict in their favour. They do not see the plain fact that the third party has already left the sub-continent and that, in India, it is replaced by the defendant in the case. Now the judge's position is occupied by the Hindus. If it is justice that the Indian Muslims expect, they have to win the confidence and goodwill of the Hindu majority. Do these Muslim leaders honestly believe that arguments like those of lawyers in a court of law are going to secure justice for them? But they refuse to look at this problem in a sober and realistic manner. For they still believe that a third party is going to judge their case and that all they need to win their case is an effective argument, however fallacious it may be, coupled with the right amount of pressure. They do not clearly name who the third party in the judge's position is today. But one need not go very deep to find out what is fairly obvious: Indian Muslim leaders believe that in their dispute with the majority in India, Pakistan is the third party occuping the position of the judge.

I must say that the leaders who think so are still living in the pre-independence age. Some months ago, I had an opportunity of meeting Dr. A. J. Faridi, leader of the Majlis-e-Mushawarat. Dr. Faridi claims to have a balanced view of things. He also believes that one ought to point out the mistakes committed by Indian Muslims. But it is an interesting experience to discuss this issue with Dr. Faridi. Once one enters into an argument with him, Dr. Faridi has the knack of evading the very principles he himself professes. For example, when I asked him why Hindus were driven out of West Pakistan, Dr. Faridi came up with the fantastic answer that if Vallabhbhai Patel had not sent planes to bring them back the West Pakistani

Hindus would not have come back to India at all. In short, Dr. Faridi is against any injustice done to anyone. In that respect he is a perfect secularist. But if one chooses to go into factual details about the injustice done to Pakistani Hindus, Dr. Faridi would categorically assert that there had never been any act of injustice towards them. On top of this, Dr. Faridi is always ready to declare that he would protest the moment he learns that there has been any injustice done to Hindus in Pakistan. However, Dr Faridi always insists on being 'convinced' and, as one might guess, it is very difficult to convince Dr Faridi.

Let us now consider some of the views of Mr. Mohammad Ismail, President of the All India Muslim League. In an interview given to U.N.I. before the last general elections, Mr Mohammad Ismail said, "If I am convinced that the Hindus of Pakistan are ill-treated or that they are forcibly converted to Islam, I would not hesitate to criticize Pakistan. For Islam does not permit such injustice." In short, Mr Mohammad Ismail is always prepared to say that if Pakistan ever treated her Hindus badly he would consider it to be a very wrong thing. The real question therefore is of determining empirically whether Pakistan really does so. It is a question of assessing plain facts. It is the responsibility of whoever argues with Mr Mohammad Ismail to convince him that it is a fact that Pakistan treats her Hindus unjustly. Once he is able to convince Mr Mohammad Ismail about the truth of this proposition, the rest follows quite easily. As soon as he is convinced, one would find Mr Mohammad Ismail unsheathing his sword and brandishing it against Pakistan. But wait! Nothing of this sort is really going to happen. For even if Pakistan does in fact treat her Hindu population badly, to convince Mr Mohammad Ismail of it is not an easy job. In fact, Mr Mohammad Ismail has decided not to be convinced on this point by anyone.

When Mr Sri Prakasa was Indian High Commissioner in Pakistan he had a very significant experience in Karachi. In his book *Birth of Pakistan,* Mr Sri Prakasa has noted the following incident: In one place a Hindu temple was broken into. Mr Sri Prakasa brought this to the notice of a Central Minister of Pakistan. He urged the Minister to give police protection to the temple. But the Minister refused to do so. What he said is quite memorable. He said, "Islam has given us the notion of perfect justice. How, in the circumstances, can a temple be broken into at all? Such a thing is unthinkable in an Islamic state."!

Mr Sri Prakasa was obviously flabbergasted. It was a fact that the temple was broken into, but an Islamic state is always perfectly just. And all Muslim leaders would readily point to the idea of justice in Islam whenever such allegations are made. They do not find it necessary to go into the facts of the matter. If there is any injustice done to the Hindus in Pakistan, it would be a verifiable proposition. But if facts are different from the claims to perfect justice made by an Islamic state, not to admit facts is the way of 'Islamic justice'. Muslims do not use the criteria used for verifying facts by ordinary people. When they do injustice, they apply the canons of 'Islamic justice'. When injustice is done to themselves, they would demand justice by universally accepted principles and would demand an application of the universal criteria of evidence. As to themselves, since Koranic justice is supposed to be equitably applied in an Islamic state, Muslim leaders believe that an Islamic state is always just. It is only others who err. Therefore, outside the Islamic state, Muslim leaders insist on the universally accepted principles of evidence and inference. Such are the double standards they apply.

Can Pakistan ever hope to get a better lawyer than Mr. Mohammad Ismail? However, Mr. Mohammad Ismail

would never admit that he pleads on behalf of Pakistan. Perhaps it does not even occur to him. There are a number of similar examples. When questioned, these Muslim leaders indignantly claim that they are one hundred per cent Indian who have fully identified themselves with the aspirations of this nation, and that they regard the Hindu majority in India as their fellow-citizens. What, however, can one make of these claims when they are seen in juxtaposition with the actual behaviour of Muslim leaders and the opinions they frequently express? Even while they claim to be perfect nationalists, Muslim leaders advance arguments to support the Pakistani claim on Kashmir. In the same way, they argue that all Pakistani infiltrators in Assam are in fact Indian Muslims. It follows that they do not believe in any rules to determine citizenship. They are prepared to go to any absurd length to argue that Pakistani infiltrators are in fact Indians. At the same time, they admit that all Pakistani infiltrators should, on principle, be evicted from India. They claim that they have no quarrel with Hindus as such; and yet, at the same time they issue religious rescripts objecting to the recitation of the Koran after Nehru's death on the ground that such a recitation is not permitted by the side of the dead body of a *kafir.* They want Dr Zakir Husain to be the President of India. However, they are quick to point out that it is unbecoming of a good Muslim to take the oath of office in Hindi or to obtain a benediction from the Shankaracharya. While justifying the creation of Pakistan, they would also argue that they have nothing to do with Pakistan which is a foreign country like any other. They compete with one another to vouch for the peaceful intentions of Pakistan. Who is responsible for disturbing the peace in the sub-continent? Their answer is ready: it is the mistakes of the Indian leadership that have created all the trouble that exists in the sub-continent. Indian leaders, according to these

Muslims, have never been reconciled to the creation of Pakistan and hence they bear animosity towards that country. Pakistan quarrels with India over Kashmir. Once Kashmir is handed over to Pakistan, these people argue, there would be no quarrel. It is obvious, they feel, that India has created hostility with Pakistan by not giving up Kashmir.

I would like to point out that these views extend to even further extremes. There is an organisation of Indian Muslims known as the Jamaat-e-Islami. The objective of this organisation is to establish an Islamic State in India. *Margdeep,* the Marathi organ of the party once wrote, "Religious conflicts in India are not likely to be resolved easily. Only when all Indians embrace a single religion, religious conflicts in India would end."

If one tries to view the inconsistencies in the views of Muslim leaders quoted earlier in the light of the above quotation from *Margdeep,* it will be obvious that Muslim leaders are engaged in a gigantic *jehad*—a holy war—against Hindus. This war would be over only when all Indians have embraced Islam. To achieve this objective, Muslim leaders are prepared to indulge in all kinds of acrobatics. It is quite true that they regard themselves as Indians. For they look forward to ruling the entire nation. Why did Muslims demand Pakistan? The answer is obvious. Muslims believe that their community is a separate nation. Why did they follow Jinnah ? This too is obvious. Jinnah's anti-Hindu views attracted them. In this context, one ought to remember that as long as Jinnah had not propounded his two nation theory Muslims did not accept him as their leader. The reasons for all this are quite clear. Muslims were fiercely anti-Hindu. As soon as Jinnah inflamed their communal passions, Muslims supported him. The passion proved to be so consuming that Indian Muslims failed to see its simple consequence which would turn them into a minority everywhere in India.

However, it must be pointed out that the support of Indian Muslims to the creation of Pakistan was not entirely based on emotional frenzy. It was also based on the theory of hostages. At the same time, Indian Muslims believed that India would eventually be ruled by Islam. The creation of Pakistan was only the first step towards an integrated Islamic state in India. One has only to recall Jinnah's tactics for the creation of Pakistan to see this point. He tried to induce the princely States in Rajasthan to join Pakistan. He tried to get Junagadh merged with Pakistan. He instigated Hyderabad to rebel against India. His propaganda that riots took place in India alone disregarded its consequence in Pakistan itself. What did the Muslims expect? They expected Hyderabad to become independent. They expected Bhopal to follow. Junagadh had already joined Pakistan. Kashmir had a Muslim majority and would therefore naturally go to Pakistan. They expected all princely States to refuse to join India and to proclaim their own independence. They predicted balkanization of India, from which Muslims would eventually benefit. These hopes were later proved to have been false. Sardar Patel merged the princely States within the Indian Union and thus shattered their hopes. This is why Muslim leaders hate Sardar Patel. One can easily understand why Dr. Faridi insists that it was Patel who brought Hindus from Pakistan to India.

In my opinion, Muslim society still mentally lives in the pre-partition world. I would like to cite another personal experience. Sometime ago, I visited Agra where I met a few educated Muslim youths. I asked them only one question: "Today you complain that Hindus are suspicious of you. I think this is an inevitable consequence of the creation of Pakistan. Why did the educated Indian Muslims in India fail to see the terrible consequences of partition?" These young men came up with a significant answer. They said: "We would

have remained a permanent minority in India. A nation is governed by the whims of the majority. We would have been utterly helpless." In fact, Indian Muslims are even today a minority. If any thing, they are a much smaller minority now than before partition. But when Indian Muslims express the views mentioned above, they believe that they have freed themselves from Hindu domination. One can understand such views if they are expressed by Pakistani Muslims. However, one finds that views which might be expected to be voiced by Pakistani Muslims are in fact voiced by Indian Muslims. The reasons are painfully obvious. Indian Muslims still regard themselves as Pakistanis, and they believe that their emancipation has been ensured by the creation of Pakistan. They expect Pakistan to deliver them fully some day. And therefore they indulge in fallacious and hypocritical arguments. Those who cannot resort to such arguments simply blame the Hindus for injustice done to themselves.

In sum, Muslims cannot reconcile themselves with the nationalism of any country where they are in a minority. They wanted Pakistan because they feared to remain a permanent minority, and they also knew that the creation of Pakistan would not solve the problem of Muslims in this sub-continent. A Muslim periodical recently observed that while partition had solved the problem of some Indian Muslims, the problem of other Indian Muslims was yet to be solved. Mr Suhrawardy said in a speech after partition that partition had solved the problem only of Muslims in Pakistan. It was necessary, he said, to tackle the problem of Indian Muslims. And a little before this, he had observed in a public meeting in Calcutta, "Is Pakistan our last demand ? I will not try to answer this question; but I can say, that is our latest demand." Each time the latest demand would be a new one. One might ask, "Which is the last demand ?" It is obvious that the last demand

would be the whole of India. Today, the latest demand is Kashmir. The next demand is going to be Assam and then for a corridor to link the two wings of Pakistan. I hope my readers are familiar with Mr Bhutto's views in this direction. Those Indian Muslim leaders who loudly proclaim that they have nothing to do with Pakistan should have assailed Mr Bhutto. However, it is significant that none of them uttered so much as a word of protest against Mr Bhutto's statements.

What, according to the Muslims, is the solution to the problem of Muslims in India ? It seems that the only solution which occurs to them is the establishment of an Islamic state in India. The Jamaat-e-Islami has already a programme to achieve this objective. And what if they fail to achieve it? Then they would seek to establish within the sovereign state of India a sovereign Islamic society. This idea of a state within a state, and a society within a society, appeals to them. One has only to take a look at the nine-point programme of the Majlis-e-Mushawarat to know this. The Mushawarat has demanded that the Indian Parliament should have no power to legislate in matters concerning Indian Muslims. Salahuddin Oweisi, a member of the Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly has in fact publicly suggested, "There should be a separate Muslim state within each state of India."

□□□

Muslims: The So-Called 'Nationalists' and the Communalists

All Muslim leaders unanimously complain that injustice is done to Muslims in India. However, they have a strange definition of injustice. They suggest, indirectly no doubt, that the very fact that India has a Hindu majority is itself a great injustice to Muslims. How else can one understand the programme of the Mushawarat which demands sovereign rights for the Muslim community ? In their own way Muslim leaders are continuously trying to remove this injustice. One of the methods of ensuring justice is to claim that Pakistani infiltrators in Assam are not Pakistani at all. A second method is to demand the granting of Indian citizenship to those Pakistanis who are illegal residents of Bihar, West Bengal and some other States of India. A third method is to oppose family planning. A professor from Aligarh University was quite frank about this. He said: "Hindus cannot keep us permanently in a minority. Remember the history of Canada. How did the question of Quebec arise ? Those citizens of Quebec who are of English origin are Protestants who practise family planning. But those who are of French origin are Catholics who never planned their families nor are doing so even today. As a result, the number of French-speaking Catholics in Quebec has increased in relation to the number of English-speaking Protestants. Now the French-speaking Catholics have started protecting their own rights and interests. We shall follow the same example. If not today, fifty years hence; if not fifty, a hundred years hence, this country will eventually be swept by an Islamic tide." The professor was quite forthright in expressing his views. There are others, leaders of Indian Muslims, who say the same thing

although they couch it in clever phrases. They say, "Our religion does not permit family planning. Grant us the freedom to practise our religion."

The Jamaat-i-Islami paper *Radiance* commenting on the report of the last census in India, said "In the last ten years the Muslim population in India has increased by 4 per cent more than the Hindus. Therefore, Muslims need not despair about their future."

It would be wrong to dismiss the examples I have cited above as the stray opinions of a handful of individuals. I have been moving throughout India for the last few months. I have been meeting Muslims from various strata of society. Nine out of every ten people I have met hold similar views. Some of them go to even further extremes. To counter my arguments, some people have asked me, "We were the rulers of this country. Do you want us now to become slaves ?" When I asked them what they proposed to do they came up with the following answer: "Fight the Hindus. We are still capable of fighting !" "Then why don't you?" I asked them. "Give us your support! If all the Muslims unite we can easily defeat the Hindus. With their unflinching faith Muslims can defeat even the most formidable enemy. This is the lesson of Islam. Please remember the battle of Badr!."

It may be useful to understand the allusion to the battle of Badr. The battle of Badr was the first fought by Muslims. It was a battle in which the Prophet scored a victory over his opponents. His army was badly outnumbered. It consisted of 310 faithful Muslims. His antagonists were the army of the Quraish tribe of Mecca. It numbered more than a thousand. Various explanations of the success of the Prophet's army can be offered. However, that he was victorious is a historical fact and so this battle occupies the position of a memorable turning point in the history of Islam and, according to the Muslims,

in the history of the whole world! The Muslim mind is still under the spell of this historical victory. When we discuss defeats and victories in battles, we resort to the scientific method. We explain the clashes between, for instance, Babar and Rana Sanga or Abdali and the Marathas in a scientific manner. A scientific explanation of Babar's victory would be based on the fact that his guns were superior to the weapons used by his adversary. While explaining the outcome of the battle fought between Abdali and the Marathas at Panipat, one would refer to a certain battle-formation at Panipat which was decisive in determining the course of the fight. One can point out that all the three major battles fought at Panipat fall into a single pattern. The victorious side in each of them was placed in a certain advantageous position on the battlefield. There is a hill formation on the Panipat plain which has always proved advantageous to the army which could occupy it. A military expert has commented that the Marathas made a mistake in occupying a disadvantageous position on the battlefield. This would be regarded as a scientific explanation. However, the Muslim mind is averse to accepting scientific explanations. It sees in every Islamic victory a repetition of the battle of Badr. Why did Abdali win ? The answer is that he was a Muslim. Why did the Marathas lose ? The answer is that they were *kafirs*. How could a handful of Muslims win ? The answer is that they were faithful. Why then did the Arabs suffer a crushing defeat at the hands of the Israelis ? The answer, this time, is that Arab leaders were not faithful Muslims! The Arabs were led by Nasser. What exactly do these Muslims mean when they criticize Nasser for lack of faith in Islam ? The answer, again, is obvious : Nasser is unfaithful because he refuses to bring about the rule of the *Shariat* in Egypt. How could a handful of Muslims rule India for a thousand years? It is simple: they were possessed by a tremendous religious zeal.

How can Muslims regain their lost power in India ? To this the answer is again very obvious: Muslims in India have to be made more devout!

Leaders like Dr Syed Mahmud of the Majlis-e-Mushawarat believe that Muslim rule in India is essential not only for the benefit of Indian Muslims but for the benefit of all Indians. Once upon a time, Dr Syed Mahmud used to be a leader of the Congress party. In other words, he is one of those people who are described as 'Nationalist Muslims'. For the last several years this dubious type called 'Nationalist Muslim' has been active in our national life. At one time, when I had very naive notions about politics, I used to view a 'Nationalist Muslim' with great respect. The time has now come for me to confess my earlier blunder. I have seen him at close quarters during recent years. Today I know that the 'Nationalist Muslim' is a strange animal having neither head nor tail; however he is an animal of doubtful pedigree who can be quite dangerous. I no more take a 'Nationalist Muslim' at his face value.

Dr Syed Mahmud is a 'Nationalist Muslim'. I met him at Delhi. When I asked him why he thought it fit to establish an organisation like the Majlis-e-Mushawarat and why he wanted to have separate platform for the Muslims, his answer appeared to be very sober. He said: "There are riots. After the riots Muslims protest against them. But nothing happens. These riots ought to stop. Muslims must feel secure. They must feel that they too have a role to play in our national life. This is why we established the Majlis." No sane person would disagree with Dr Mahmud on these points. At the most, one may wonder whether it is necessary to have a separate platform comprising Muslims alone to achieve this objective. But Dr Syed Mahmud did not stop at that. He continued, "And as you know, the situation in this country is deteriorating day by day. *It is quite well known that Hindus are incapable of ruling a*

country. This is what history has proved adequately. We are going down the drain as a nation because Muslims in this country have no share in power. Muslims should develop initiative and participate in the government of this nation. Only Muslims can save this nation from doom." (Emphasis added.) From these remarks it should be obvious to anyone how deep is the concern of Dr Syed Mahmud for the future of this nation. To reform it Muslims ought to take their share in ruling this nation. This is the firm belief of Dr Syed Mahmud. He believes that history has proved the inability of Hindus to rule.

We may next turn to the comments made by Khalilullah Husaini, Chief of Tamir-e-Millat in *Irshad,* the organ of the Jamaat-e-Islami, following the Chinese aggression of 1962: "This defeat has proved that our present rulers have no capacity to rule! The only alternative this nation has is to hand over all power to those who ruled this country for one thousand years!" Is there any difference between the views of Dr Syed Mahmud and the leaders of Jamaat-e-Islami? I, for one, find none; and yet Dr Syed Mahmud is regarded as a nationalist. We must all examine our own concept of nationalism to find out what kind of people it can really accommodate. Is the aspiration of a minority to rule the majority to be regarded as nationalistic ? Or is one to regard nationalism as an advocacy of national interests based on contemporary concepts of fundamental ethical values embodying humanism and secular justice? Those who regard these so-called Muslims as nationalists have to answer these questions.

These nationalist Muslims are often loudly congratulated for having opposed the creation of Pakistan. In order to know where exactly they stand, we ought to take a look at the precise nature of the differences between nationalist Muslims and the Muslim League. The Muslim League held that Muslims in this country must enjoy a privileged and special position in

the government. Initially, Jinnah advocated the same views. In short, the Muslim League believed that the current of nationalism in this country contained a separate sub-current of Muslim sub-nationalism! Jinnah wanted this sub-nationalism to be recognised and enshrined in the Constitution itself by granting the Muslims greater representation than their population would entitle them. Nehru opposed the very idea of such sub-nationalism. He refused to concede special representation to Muslims. The real conflict was thus between these two positions. Jinnah's position was that Indian nationalism should make a compromise with Muslim nationalism. Nehru's position was that such separatist sub-nationalism should be rejected on principle. This was not a political issue at all. While Jinnah represented the Muslim movement of a separate, religion-based nationalism, Nehru refused to accept such a concept of nationalism. This was the basis of the conflict that led to the creation of Pakistan. Neither the Muslims nor Jinnah quarrelled with Hindu leaders such as Savarkar or Golwalkar. On the contrary, it seems that Jinnah was basically in agreement with Savarkar. At the annual session of the Hindu Maha Sabha at Ahmedabad, Savarkar referred in his presidential address to Muslim nationalism by saying, "It appears that there exists a separate Muslim nation within India." This must be considered significant in the above context. Savarkar admitted the existence of a separate Muslim nationalism. He had even shown his willingness to give them a written guarantee that their culture, their language, and their proportional representation would be safeguarded. The only thing Savarkar denied to the Muslims was a separate, independent and sovereign state. In this regard, it must be noted that only Nehru held a secular Indian nationalist position. He believed in secular integration in the strictest sense of the terms. Jinnah did not want secular integration.

He wanted various sub-nationalist currents to exist within the stream of Indian nationalism. Moreover, he wanted to keep special privileges for the sub-nations. When Nehru refused to grant such special privileges, Jinnah demanded Pakistan. We must remember these historical facts in this context.

In this connection, it is often argued that the Congress committed a great blunder by refusing to give the Muslim League one-third of the total seats in the Uttar Pradesh Cabinet of 1937. Those who argued so probably believed that this was merely a political strategy. I would urge that it is necessary to view both the Congress and the Muslim League from a non-political point of view. The demands of Muslim leaders were based on religion. This was not, therefore, merely a question of granting a few seats more to the Muslim League. At that time Jinnah said that the Muslims wanted to share power with the Hindus. The idea was to secure a fifty per cent share of power for the Muslims. When this attempt failed, the Muslims demanded an independent sovereign state of their own.

What would have happened if there were a compromise according to the demands of the Muslim League in 1937 ? This would have meant a recognition of Muslims as a separate entity by the Constitution. The Muslims would have thus acquired a special position and special privileges. This would have created a perpetual controversy about the privileges. Muslim leaders, however, would have interpreted these privileges in quite a different manner. They could have, and probably would have, vetoed any proposed Bill affecting Muslim interests, and this would have affected the very progress of the nation. Within a single state, the two nationalisms would have clashed continuously. There would have been a terrible civil war. The conflict we witness today between India and Pakistan would have then assumed the form of a civil war within the sub-continental state of India.

I should not be misunderstood as a person indirectly justifying the creation of Pakistan by pointing to the possibility of a civil war. It is not a question merely of a civil war. In the course of history, many nations have had to face a civil war for the sake of preserving their integrity as nations. Sometimes, it is necessary to take such a risk. It is necessary in many instances to suppress separatist tendencies most ruthlessly. The question here is how we would have faced this challenge. Would we have ruthlessly crushed a rebellion? The only honest answer to this question would be in the negative. For in an undivided India a specially privileged Muslim community would have vigorously continued a movement for the Islamicization of India. In such a situation, it is most likely that the Muslim League and the so-called 'Nationalist Muslims' would have joined forces.

This strategy of 'Nationalist Muslim' leaders is amply suggested by their own speeches during the period in question. During those days, Maulana Hussain Ahmad Madni was considered a great 'Nationalist Muslim' leader. He was President of the Jamaat-e-Ulema-i-Hind. When the *ulema* convened a conference in Delhi in the year 1945, he said in his presidential address "It is the non-Muslims who are the field of action for this 'tabligh' of Islam and form the raw material for this splendid activity.. .we are opposed to the idea of limiting the right of missionary activities of Islam within any particular area. The Muslims have got a right in all the nooks and corners of India by virtue of the great struggle and grand sacrifices of their ancestors in this country. Now it is our duty to maintain that claim and try to widen its scope, instead of giving it up."*

* *The Deoband School and the Demand for Pakistan* by Z.H. Faruqi, Asia Publishing House, Bombay, 1963, p. 117.

The same learned Maulana has said elsewhere, "If Dara had triumphed, Muslims would have stayed in India but not Islam. Since Aurangzeb triumphed, both Muslims and Islam were here to stay."! According to the Maulana, the faith Dara followed was not genuine Islam because Dara wanted to tolerate the Hindus. He did not insist on the rule of the *Shariat.* He did not interpret religion 'correctly', that is, in strict accordance with the tradition. From the above views of the Maulana it should be clear what kind of Islam a majority of 'Nationalist Muslims' subscribed to and what, in the final analysis, their great goals were.

What was the difference between Jinnah and the nationalist Muslims? While Jinnah wanted a separate state, the nationalist Muslims wanted the whole of India. Jinnah knew that it was impossible to get the whole of India, and therefore he settled for Pakistan. Many nationalist Muslims believe that a *jehad* against the Hindus would have got a much larger reward. That is why they opposed the creation of Pakistan. Dr Munje, a leader of the Hindu Mahasabha, once said, "This Jinnah appears to be a fool. He can swallow up the whole of India. I do not understand why he is demanding a separate state."! I am certain that when he said this, Dr Munje had the religious motives of Indian Muslims in mind.

Muslim leaders always blame Hindu communalism for the partition. I fail to see where, in this entire discussion, Hindu communalism comes in. The clash was between Nehru and Jinnah, and Gandhi and Jinnah; Savarkar and Golwalkar are not in the picture at all. Jinnah was not fighting Savarkar and Golwalkar. He never mentioned their communalism. Jinnah accused Gandhi of being a Hindu communalist, refusing to concede his demands. He criticized Nehru in the same way. Similarly, when Muslim leaders hold communalists responsible for the partition, they want to suggest that it was Gandhi and

Nehru who were 'Hindu communalists.' The implications are clear: they charge every Hindu with being a communalist. At the same time, they make the strange claim that every Muslim is a nationalist.

The real conflict, therefore, was not between Hindu and Muslim communalists. It was a conflict between the secular nationalism of Gandhi and Nehru and the religious nationalism of Indian Muslims. It is true that Gandhi and Nehru failed to keep the country undivided through secular integration. But this failure is not theirs alone. It is the collective failure of all of us. The stark reality is that Hindu society does not have the strength and capacity to accept this challenge. This painful reality was recognised by Gandhi, Nehru and Patel. Those Hindu communalists who abuse Gandhi and Nehru most vehemently do not recognise this reality, and this is even more painful.

To understand the true nature of Muslim communalism in India, it is necessary to study the nature of Islam as a religion. It is equally necessary to study the history of Islam. Muslims believe Islam to be the latest and therefore the most perfect religion. They regard Muhammad as the last and the final Prophet. Therefore they believe that there cannot be any new religion after the advent of Islam.

They think it is unnecessary to embrace even a chronologically new and more modern faith. They believe that Islam does not need any modification. These Islamic dogmas do not suffer from the restrictions admitted by other religions. When Muslims believe Islam to be perfect and immutable, their faith does not extend to a purely theological domain. Islam has not merely given a theology; it has also given its followers a complete social and political system. Islam has laid down the principles on which the relations between Muslims and infidels are based. An average Muslim who is

orthodox in his views fully subscribes to all these dogmas. Some Muslims like Maulana Moududi and Maulana Abul Hassan Nadvi have even discovered an Islamic economic system in addition to these! Today Maulana Moududi and Maulana Nadvi have a very large following among Indian Muslims, and this can hardly be ignored.

Thus the Muslim mind is still under the spell of medieval faith. This happens to the followers of any religion for some time. In every religious group, one finds such hardcore orthodoxy which clings to obsolete traditions. But one also finds that in the Hindu as well as the Christian society there emerged a class of reformers who rejected such dogmas outright. There are reasons for this. Their religions were subjected to some attacks. Both Christians and Hindus had to face Islamic aggression. The defeats they suffered stimulated these societies to reform themselves. Muslim society is unfortunate in this regard. It has never been subjected to the traumatic experience of an attack which would later activate it to reform itself.

When I refer to the attacks to which the Christian and Hindu societies were subjected, I am not referring merely to political aggression in a limited sense; even Muslims have been subjected to such attacks. The Muslim community has sometimes been enslaved by aggressors. And yet its religion has never been threatened. On the other hand, whenever the Muslims defeated the Christians and the Hindus they did not stop at enslaving them politically; they tried to convert them forcibly to Islam. The followers of other faiths thus realized that if Muslims enslaved them, their religion was in danger. This is what compelled these societies to think of their own religion in a radically new manner.

Muslims have often been enslaved by others. In India, Hindus have often defeated Muslims and ruled over them.

But Hindus did not force Muslims to embrace Hinduism. Even Shivaji, who could have successfully done so, did not attempt it. When some Christians defeated Muslims they had already given up the idea of forcible conversion and Christian society was already entering the modern age. When Christians were not modern, even they have forcibly converted Muslims to their own faith. Spain is an example. But this is the only exception to the rule. When the Turkish Empire started disintegrating, and when the Western nations started grabbing it piece by piece, they took over Muslim territory as imperialists and colonialists. They did not try to spread their religion. It was not their intention to conquer the Muslims in order to convert them to the Christian faith.

In short, when the Turks captured Constantinopole they renamed it and called it Istanabul. They tore down its Church and built a mosque over it. Christian citizens in the Byzantine Empire were converted to Islam. When the Moguls annexed a new territory in India, the first thing they did was to demolish the temple in each conquered village. This was followed by forcible conversion of some citizens to Islam. Aurangzeb destroyed the temple of *Vishweshevara* at Banaras, and built a mosque at the birth place of Lord Krishna at Mathura. But the Western conquerors of Mecca and Medina did not inflict any changes of this type on the conquered. The Mosque of Omar in Jerusalem remained intact and Muslim faith remained secure. Muslims were fortunate to have full religious freedom even when they were ruled by others. A king like Shivaji pushed back aggressors and yet he made grants for the preservation of Pirs and Dargahs. But history has taken such absurd twists and turns that it has left the Muslim mind still medieval in its make-up. It has never shocked Muslims into an awareness of modernity. Indeed, one is inclined to blame history more than the Muslims themselves for this phenomenon!

However, this fact has had many significant consequences. Muslims have been destroyed and Muslims have been ruled by others, but Muslim society has not been destroyed. When a society survives, it can free itself from the shackles of alien domination. It can reestablish a state of its own. In this context, it must be remembered that the Muslim notion of freedom and dependence are not related to, or even consistent with, the modern concept of nationalism. Independence, according to the Muslims, is synonymous with all power being concentrated in the hands of the Muslim community. It is in this sense that they regard Pakistani Muslims as free and Indian Muslims as still in bondage. Indian Muslims believe themselves to be like the Muslims in Mecca and they believe that the Muslims in Pakistan are like the Muslims in Medina. Before the Prophet Muhammad conquered Mecca, Muslims in Mecca had to suffer persecution at the hands of the Quraish tribe. On the other hand, Medina was under Muslim rule. When Muhammad captured Mecca, the Muslims in Mecca were emancipated. I suspect that at least 75 per cent of the rural Muslim population in India believes itself to be in the same position as the Muslims in Mecca before the Prophet's triumphant arrival.

At the time of the last general elections, I accompanied a Muslim friend of mine who was contesting the election. I met a gentleman there who said, "What do you have this election propaganda for ? Why have elections at all ? Ayub Khan will soon come over here and put a stop to all this !" I did not lose my temper when I heard this. The gentleman who expressed these views was illiterate. However, I was sad to find a concrete example of the Muslim mind still unfortunately under the spell of obsolete, medieval notions. It was poor consolation for me to understand the apparent foolishness of his hopes.

This kind of medieval thinking is characteristic of Indian

Muslims. In Pakistan, the process of modernization appears to have made a beginning. However, in India the Muslim community is obsessed with its minority status to such an extent that it tries and succeeds in preventing any process which would modernize themselves. It appears that all so-called secular political parties in India are agreed upon keeping Indian Muslims in their medieval state. The Congress party has, in fact, shown that it is opposed to the modernization of Indian Muslims. The reasons for this policy are to be found in the nature of the Muslim leadership within the Congress party. This leadership mostly consists of the orthodox and traditionalist *ulema*. The *ulema* still exert a powerful influence on the senior leadership within the Congress party. It is hardly surprising that our political and administrative leadership, which seeks advice from Muslim leaders who still retain their medieval attitude, cannot modernize the Muslim community. Islam in India is Islam in its crudest form : that is why pan-Islamic movements exist in India. This is also the reason why whenever the Prophet is criticized, Muslims in India start movements and agitations unparalleled in the rest of the Muslim world. The Khilafat Committee is still stationed in India. The pan-Islamic-minded Muslims in India exert the greatest possible pressure on the government for adopting a policy favourable to the Arabs. Indian Muslims make strong attempts to justify the Islamic pact between Pakistan, Iran, Turkey and Saudi Arabia. And this in spite of the fact that they know the pact to be against Indian interests. Maulana Asad Madni, Secretary of Jamiat-e-Ulema-i-Hind criticizes as 'traitors' all Indian leaders who are against the policy of supporting the Arabs. Madni and other Muslims like him believe that the love of India is the same as the love of all Muslims anywhere. Thus hundreds of thousands of rupees are raised for the Arabs in India and yet, at the same time, a

Muslim hero like Abdul Hamid Hasham who fell in the war with Pakistan and won the *Param Veer Chakra*—the highest award for military heroism—is ignored by all Muslim organizations in India.

Indian Muslim leaders perpetually complain that they are denied religious freedom in India. They claim that the Hindu majority in India treats them with injustice. They fail to realize that their definition of Islam is twisted and strange, for these leaders believe that the greatest injustice to Indian Muslims is the simple fact that there is a majority of Hindus in this country.

□□□

The Communal Malady : A Diagnosis

Secular parties in India have always considered the problem of Hindu-Muslim relations from the viewpoint of romantic idealism and have refused to face boldly the harsh truth underlying it. After the outbreak of a communal riot, they have hardly ever thought it necessary to do anything beyond issuing public appeals for communal peace and ritually denouncing Hindu communalist forces as the prime cause of the trouble. If, even after the recent communal flare-up in Maharashtra, they do not make any attempt to understand the real nature of this problem and fail to make conscious efforts to foster a new secular trend in the country, the future is likely to be more bleak than ever.

There are many reasons why the communal problem has again assumed menacing proportions. After the birth of Pakistan Muslim communalists were, for some time, lying low because of the fear of Hindu retaliation. Hindu communalists were paralysed by the intensity of popular reaction to Gandhi's assassination at the hands of a Hindu fanatic. Now in the changed situation, both are again rearing their heads.

This, however, is not the whole diagnosis. During the pre-independence period, Hindu communalism was never very strong, and even today it is not as powerful as we imagine it to be. It would be unfair to underestimate the influence of the secular forces generated by the Hindu liberal movement over the past hundred years. If today the liberal trends among the Hindus are on the wane, the main cause is to be traced to the continuing predominance of separatist and communalist trends among Indian Muslims even twenty-three years after partition.

These separatist forces are motivated by the ideal of separate nationhood rooted in the idea of a religious community and are therefore opposed to the concept of secular nationalism. It is high time that secularists grasped this basic fact of our political life.

The true character of this conflict can be appreciated only if we understand the historical urges of the Muslim mind. The Muslim mind considers nationalism in the context of religion and this problem exists with varying intensity in all the countries—such as India, Ethiopia, the Philippines—that have Muslim minorities. The Islamic doctrine of exclusiveness is essentially responsible for it.

The tradition of considering nationalism in the context of political power for a religious group impelled Indian Muslims in the pre-independence days to keep themselves aloof from the emerging secular nationalist trends in the country and demand a separate nation comprising Muslim majority provinces. However, even after the creation of Pakistan, Muslims remained a minority in India. Mr Jinnah had asserted that after the creation of two nations, the problem of minorities in both would wither away. In a way, the problem did wither away in Pakistan, in the sense that the Hindu minority was ruthlessly made to wither away in West Pakistan.

In India, however, the legacy of partition has remained to haunt us in the form of a two-fold problem. We have, on the one hand, to curb the expansionist ambitions of Pakistan and, on the other, integrate the Muslims of India into the fabric of our secular nationalism.

These traditions of Islam and the strong separatist trends they have engendered among Indian Muslims are the main cause of the persistent communal tension. To claim that Muslim separatism continues to exist because the country has not adequately imbibed the spirit of secularism is to betray

ignorance of the working of the Muslim mind. The real cause of the present conflict is that the separatist urges of Muslim nationalism have always existed parallel to those of secular nationalism. Muslims have never agreed that partition put an end to this problem. As I have mentioned in a recent article, Mr Hasan Surhawardy, Chief Minister of undivided Bengal, had pointed out in 1946 that, "Pakistan is not our last demand". In his letter written after the partition to Choudhary Khaliquzzaman, Mr Surhawardy had propounded the idea of a Muslim majority area in India. It is not without significance that the post-independence trend of Muslim politics in India has followed the direction laid down by Mr Jinnah and Mr Surhawardy.

Muslim communalism was not eliminated even during the Nehru era. Muslim communalists in the Constituent Assembly had opposed his concept of secular nationalism and, even during his regime, they had raised a cry of "genocide" of Muslims being committed in India. Mr Hafizur Rahman, leader of the Jamiyat-ul-Ulema had, in 1958, accused him of being partisan on the issue of the Hindu-Muslim relations. It is also noteworthy that Muslim organisations had never supported Mr Nehru's stand on Kashmir and had charged that his doublefaced policy was responsible for non-recognition of Urdu as an official language in certain States.

It is necessary to consider here briefly Nehru's stand on the issue of Hindu-Muslim relations. The charge levelled by some of his critics that he was pro-Muslim betrays their ignorance of his deep understanding of history. He was perhaps the only Indian statesman who understood the historical forces operating behind Muslim politics in India. His policy was therefore aimed at rendering Muslim separatism ineffective by strengthening the forces of secular nationalism. His insistence on a common electorate and the inclusion in the Constitution of the enactment of a uniform civil code as a

Directive Principle of State Policy in spite of fierce opposition from Muslim communalists may be cited as examples of his determination in this regard.

Moreover, Nehru was well aware that Muslims could easily combine themselves in one political party because of their social structure and the total absence among them of a modern political consciousness based on secular considerations. As regards Hindus, he knew that their stratified social structure always impeded their mobilisation on a common political platform. At the same time, because of their liberal reformist traditions, Hindus had developed a progressive political consciousness which made them alive to larger socio-economic issues. Hence, he knew, they tended to choose political parties on non-religious considerations. Because of this peculiar situation he usually tried to project himself as a guardian of Muslim interests with a view to preventing the re-emergence of a strong Muslim party.

He did succeed in achieving this objective to a limited extent. But during the same period while the Jamaat-e-Islami, an anti-Hindu Wahhabi organisation could establish its hold among Muslims in North India, the Muslim League emerged in Kerala and the Tamir-e-Millat and Ittehadul-Muslimeen were revived by former Razakars in the old Hyderabad State. Similarly, the Jamiyat-ul-Ulema which had associated itself with the Congress in the national movement gradually adopted an obscurantist and communalist posture. Not only that, its influence on the ruling party prevented the emergence of a secular Muslim leadership within the Congress.

After Nehru's death the Indian political scene underwent a radical change and there commenced a process of consolidation of Muslim communalist forces. The Majlis-e-Mushawarat was established as a united front of all Muslim communalist organisations. It should be remembered that

the Mushawarat's call to vote against the Congress in the 1967 general election was a decisive contributory factor in radically altering the political situation in the country.

A mere glance at the charter of demands drawn up by the Mushawarat would reveal that it wants a sovereign status for the Muslim community. This is not surprising. Being a community scattered all over the country, Muslims cannot demand a sovereign State of their own as there are no Muslim-majority areas now. Hence the demand for a sovereign constitutional status within the Indian Union, to begin with.

To be sure, the Mushawarat has not been able to achieve all its demands. Its demand for recognition of Urdu as an official language in U.P. and Bihar could not be conceded by the leftist parties because of the strong popular opposition. However, in Kerala the League could join the State Ministry and secure the objective, advocated by Mr Suhrawardy, of establishing a Muslim-majority area in the form of Malapuram district.

The aims of the Muslim separatists are clear and unambiguous. The Congress split had made the emergence of a coalition Government at the centre a distinct possibility. It was therefore not surprising that these separatist forces counted on the possibility of Muslim communalist organisations gaining representation in the Centre if the Muslim political parties and groups came together on a common platform.

Every communal riot has helped the growth of Muslim communalist forces. In this context, it is necessary to understand the viewpoint advanced by the Muslim League leaders at its recent conference at Palghat. In their speeches, they claimed that communal riots did not take place wherever the League had a strong hold among Muslims; they occurred only where it was not strong enough. It was therefore contended that the League needed to be built up into a strong organisation all over the country to eliminate the spectre of

communal riots. This argument, however, also implies that the communal riots are essential for strengthening the Muslim League. No other reason needs therefore to be sought for the fact that many a time communal troubles are provoked by Muslims. The argument that the Muslims are always the worse sufferers and therefore it is unlikely that they would ever provoke the riots is also similarly deceptive. Riots and political assassinations have always been used as weapons by Muslim communalists to further their ends. The League achieved Pakistan by resorting to communal violence.

Similarly, it engineered the assassinations of Mr Allabaksh in Sindh, brother of Mr Rafi Ahmed Kidwai in 1937 and of Sir Shafat Ahmad Khan, Congress member of the Interim Government at the Centre in 1946.

The Khaskar's tradition of riots and the orgy of violence, arson and loot indulged in by Razakars in Hyderabad are too well known to need detailed mention. Muslims suffered more in these riots. But these organisations had taken this into account while formulating their objectives and strategies. According to Muslim communalists, this is part of their holy *jehad* and the Muslim victims are *shaheeds* who lay down their lives for the cause of Islam. It is not without significance that Dr A.J. Faridi leader of the Majlis in U.P. admiringly refers to these victims as *shaheeds*!

Those who regard their community as constituting a separate nation would always work for the attainment of separate nationhood. Gradually that demand is being skilfully put forward by the Muslim community. Communal riots are grist to the propaganda mill of these separatists. They are asking for Muslim-majority areas as a step in that direction.

Radiance, the weekly organ of the Jamaat-e-Islami, in its May 17, 1970 issue has already asked: "Why not an effort be made to take five of six States on a cultural basis, so that

Muslims from all the States may live there in an atmosphere of peace, free from periodic chastisement ?" This indicates the ultimate aim of the Muslim separatist forces.

The Prime Minister wants to eradicate communalism from this land, but she is indulging in self-deception if she feels that she can curb **Hindu** communalist forces by conniving at Muslim separatism.

In fact, under pressure from Muslim separatists, she is undermining the very foundations of secular nationalism laid by her father. The unceremonious exit of Mr M. G. Chagla from her Cabinet and the relaxation of the rule prohibiting polygamy among Muslim employees of the Central Government are but two examples of the concessions she is making to Muslim communalism. This appeasement of Muslim obscurantist forces would only jeopardise the future of our secular nationalism.

It is a tragic irony of our political life that the Hindu obscurantists who demand abolition of the property right conferred on Hindu women by the Hindu Code clamour in Parliament for equal rights for Muslim women; while the leftists and others, who are pledged to modernize our society, support, if not justify, Muslim separatism and obscurantism.

The problem of national integration cannot be solved by appeasing Muslim separatism. It can be solved only by consciously fostering liberal modern trends among the Muslims. The policy of appeasement adopted by the so-called secular parties is really hindering this transformation. Unless it is given up, it would be futile to hope for any improvement in Hindu-Muslim relations. Indeed, they will continue to deteriorate more and more till Muslims and the secularists learn from experience or the Hindu-Muslim problem is "finally" solved in a tribal manner.

❐❐❐

Strange Bedfellows: Communists' Intimacy with Communalists

Muslim communalists in India and Indian communists have always remained strange, but inseparable, bedfellows. Many people are perplexed by this unusually intimate relationship between those who claim to believe in the Marxist dictum, 'Religion is the opium of the people' and see social change in terms of dialectic processes in history, and Muslim communalists in India.

In fact, this intimacy is not at all surprising. There are significant resemblances between the communist movement and the Muslim communalist movement. First, both movements are international in scope and character. Both aim at establishing an ideological state and neither cares for the means employed in achieving its end. However, their purposes and the processes by which they achieve their objectives are different. As regards the communists, first there is the emergence of the international communist movement in a country. This movement seeks to establish a state. Once the state is established, the movement is directed towards creating the ideal, that is, the Marxist, society. In the case of Muslims the process is just the reverse. A Muslim society already exists. This society seeks to establish its own state. Pakistan is an example of this. In the absence of a Muslim society, a Muslim state cannot be brought into existence.

The basis of the Islamic movement is not the whole of a society but only the Islamic segment of it. The Islamic movement can establish its own state only by subjugating, if not destroying, the other parts of society. For instance, if Muslims happen to be in a minority they can establish an

Islamic state only by reducing the non-Muslims to the status of a minority—either by proselytization or by force. Where there already is a Muslim majority, an Islamic state is naturally in existence. No modernist or liberal trends in a truly Islamic state can ever revise its social structure. This crucial difference is likely to be ignored, for instance, in the context of the collaborative attempts of China (a Communist state) and Pakistan (an Islamic state) to precipitate chaos in India. Islam is a religion and therefore the elimination of other religious beliefs is a necessary precondition for an Islamic state. And no social change in such a state would ever bring about a restoration of the former composition of society. An Islamic state may change. It may even become a secular state. But even this secular state would be the secular government of and by a Muslim majority, in which non-Muslims would have little or no place.

It would also be worthwhile to note the significant resemblances between the communist and the Islamic movement. The communists believe that Islam was the first religion to bring about social equality. In fact, it is the claim to social equality that links both these doctrines. (Did Islam in fact bring about social equality ? What is the nature of social equality in Islam? Such questions arise in this context, but they will have to be dealt with separately). It is assumed that neither movement is nationalistic in character. When communists are not in power, they are internationalists; when Muslims are a minority in any country they lack a nationalistic spirit and have an internationalistc, that is, pan-Islamic, attitude. When either the communists or the Islamists are faced with a choice between modern, territorial nationalism and allegiance to the state on the one hand, and their own international ideology on the other, most of them invariably choose the latter. In short, a communist, when not in power,

is primarily an internationalist and only secondarily, if at all, a nationalist. A Muslim in minority is primarily a Muslim and only secondarily, if at all, a nationalist. Both Muslims and communists regard their own concept of social structure as perfect. Both reject freedom of thought. What is even more significant is the fact that both employ strikingly similar methods of propaganda against their opponents. The communists usually dismiss their opponents merely by calling them "stooges of the imperialists" (the current vogue is to brand them all as "agents of the C.I.A."). Indian Muslims, when they criticize another Indian Muslim, call him an "agent" or "stooge" of the Hindus ! * Currently, Chairman Mao brands Russian communists as "revisionists". In the Koran when Muhammad discusses the messages of earlier Messiahs such as Moses and Jesus, he criticizes them as 'impure' due to 'revisions'.

The resemblances between these two movements do not end at this point. As soon as they come to power, communists suddenly change from internationalism to extreme nationalism. Instead of decentralizing power, they pursue a policy of strengthening and further centralizing power. The same happens within the course of the Islamic movement. Most nations with a Muslim majority are extremely nationalistic in their social and political outlook. In pre-partition India, the Muslim League used to demand greater provincial autonomy. But as soon as Pakistan was created, all remnants of autonomy were totally eliminated. Although all Arab nations have a common history, tradition and language, they fail to unite. Communists purge their opponents no sooner than they come to power. Muslim nationalistic movements, wherever

* For instance, Maulana Azad. I too have been dubbed a 'Sanghist Muslim' in an editorial by *Radiance,* the weekly organ of the Jamaat-e-Islami.

there is a Muslim majority, do not allow non-Muslims to exist freely and equally. A clear example of this is provided by the forced exodus of non-Muslims from Pakistan. But this phenomenon is not limited to Pakistan. Every Muslim nation state, with the exception of Turkey and Indonesia, treats minorities as unequals. Even Arab nationalism is no exception to this. In fact, Arab nationalism is not even Islamic nationalism. It is racist. Arabs believe that being Arab is being the most perfect Muslim and to them "Islamic" means "Arabic". In the Arab world, the political connotations of the terms 'Arab' and 'Muslim' are identical.

Let us turn now to India. Events in India after 1945 help to explain the communist strategy behind their justification of the demand for Pakistan. Since 1942 the communists had lost the possibility of getting a popular backing due to their dissociation from the struggle for independence. There was hardly any backing to be lost by them even if they supported the demand for Pakistan. India was on the verge of becoming independent. The nature of this independence was, for Indian communists, a matter of anxious speculation.

Peace had broken out and the cold war had begun. The Soviet Union and its Western Allies against the Nazi menace had developed a relationship of increasing tension among themselves. In such a situation, the Indian communists had to speculate whether the ruling party in India would support the Soviet Union or the West in the cold war. They decided to back Muslim communalists in order to precipitate nation-wide disintegration, gain a popular backing from the Indian Muslims, induce the ruling group in Pakistan to support Soviet policies, and to benefit from the general chaos and factional fights in the entire subcontinent. This strategy has proved to be a spectacular failure, because the assumption on which it was based was wide off the mark. Pakistan dealt with

communists very sternly. Dr Ashraf and Mr Sajjad Zahir who went to Pakistan from India to give a momentum to the communist movement there landed up directly in jail. It took them ten years to get out of jail and they chose to return to India. Although Ayub and Kosygin display a most cordial friendship, there are many communist workers rotting for the last twenty years in the jails of East Pakistan.

However, during the intervening years Muslim communalists and Indian communists seemed to act almost in collusion. It was not a mere coincidence that the Razakar movement in Hyderabad and the subversive uprising in nearby Telangana occurred at about the same time. When the CPI accepted the Ranadive policy of nationwide subversion and uprising, many eminent Muslim League leaders throughout India suddenly became 'communists' ! The well-known Assamese writer Abdul Malik, the editor of the Urdu weekly (and a fellow-traveller) *Siyasat* published from Hyderabad—Abid Ali—Maulana Ishaq Shambli of U.P., Mohammed Iliyas of West Bengal, and Dr Ghani are some of the more glaring examples of this phenomenon.

The year 1947 saw the dissolution of the Muslim League in India. Most of its leaders went to Pakistan. Communal riots shook India and the Hindus developed a feeling of strong abhorrence towards Muslim communalism. Muslim communalists chose to change their strategy under these circumstances. Some pretended that they had given up their communalism and joined the Congress. The idea was to protect Muslim interests from within the ruling party. Mr A. K. Hafizka of Bombay, for example, is such a recruit. Those who did not relish compromises of this type decided to continue with their subversive tactics under a more acceptable label, knowing that Hindus would react adversely to open expressions of Muslim communalism. They were attracted

towards communism not because they embraced the Marxist ideology but because the communist strategy of permanent subversion was congenial and appeared useful to them.

Indian communists, however, have continued to practise double-dealing in relation to Indian Muslims. Their acrobatics make an interesting study in itself. It offers the student of this strange bedfellowship rich and detailed material. In fact, this love affair is still thriving in spite of the basic incompatability between the objectives of communism and of Muslim communalism. All is fair, perhaps, in love, war, communism, and communalism!

❐❐❐

The Chief Obstacles in the Way of Muslim Integration

The demand for Pakistan was based on the theory that there was nothing common between the Hindus and the Muslims of India. In order to justify this demand it was argued that the presence of a Hindu minority in Pakistan was a guarantee for the safety of a Muslim minority in India. In short, a majority of the Muslims demanded in 1947 that (i) an independent sovereign state be established comprising provinces with a Muslim majority, (ii) the Hindus should remain as a minority in Pakistan, and (iii) the Hindus in Pakistan should be held as hostages by the Pakistani Muslims for the well being of Indian Muslims. The Hindus reluctantly conceded this demand and thus the decision to divide the sub-continent was reached.

I consider the Hindu-Muslim problem as one specific to India. Its scope does not extend to the entire sub-continent, nor is it necessary to extend it in that manner. The Hindu-Muslim problem in the sub-continent no longer remains an issue between two communities; it has now assumed the proportions of an international dispute between India and Pakistan. It is therefore a question of international relations. It can be seen as a conflict between two different kinds of nationalism and the motive forces operating behind them. We are therefore compelled to discuss the nature of the decision made in 1947.

To discuss the decision to partition the subcontinent is to discuss the ambivalence that clouds it. It is necessary to clarify all the implications of this decision and to discuss the obstacles in the way of its implementation. It is not only a matter of

discussing the decision to partition the sub-continent. We must also remember that we decided to integrate the rest of India on secular lines in 1947. Our leaders decided to grant Indian Muslims as well as all other minorities equal status as citizens of India. We gave ourselves a Constitution which grants equal opportunities to all citizens and an even more important aspect of this decision is that we vowed that we would create a multi-religious, secular, and integrated Indian society. The moment we made this historic decision, the Hindu-Muslim problem was in one sense eliminated for two reasons: (i) we gave Pakistan to the Muslims in order to solve the Hindu-Muslim problem once for all; and (ii) even more important, we decided to create an integrated nation based on equal citizenship, cancelled separate electorates, and abolished special representation. We abolished all kinds of religious prerogatives. The moment we did this, we solved the problem for all practical purposes.

Today, the real problem we face in India is that of creating a secular, integrated Indian society. We are concerned today not with the Hindu-Muslim problem but with that of removing the obstacles in the way of a liberal society integrated on secular lines. In short, my theme in this essay is the problem of Muslim integration in the fabric of a liberal and secular Indian society.

To discuss this problem certain preconditions must be fulfilled. We need participants in the discussion who are self-critical, introspective and capable of thinking in a secular way. Among Indian Muslims there are very few people who are capable of introspection. Individuals like Mr M. C. Chagla and Professor Habib are exceptional. Among Indian Muslims there is a conspicuous absence of unbiased, self-critical and rational individuals who can discuss this problem fruitfully. This is not entirely the fault of individual Indian Muslims.

The capacity for self-criticism, the courage to face facts, the ability to lead the community with a critical awareness of one's own virtues and shortcomings, implies the existence of a level of sophistication in the intelligentsia. The Muslim intelligentsia in India lacks these qualities. Their so-called leaders are usually the leaders of a blind, .orthodox, and ill-educated community. Such people do not discuss their own faults; rather, they obdurately cling to their own views. All of them put forward the same arguments in the same tone again and again. When they find faults, the faults are invariably those of other people. They do not have the capacity to understand their own mistakes, and when people who lack this capacity pretend to find solutions for a problem, the solutions are hardly useful. When the wrong kind of people enter the fray, discussion does not lead to any meaningful dialogue. It only leads to further mutual bitterness and further aggravation of tensions already in existence.

When I say that the Muslim mind is incapable of critical introspection, I imply that the Hindu intelligentsia has to a certain extent developed this capacity. One sees that the Hindu intelligentsia sometimes refuses to be swept by emotional appeals. During the recent agitation for a ban on cow-slaughter, one saw several instances which could support this observation. Some Hindu intellectuals have been consistently opposing the demand for a ban on cow-slaughter. It is not necessary here to discuss the grounds on which they oppose the demand. Some oppose it because they believe that such a ban would be incompatible with the secular ideals of Indian society. Others oppose it because they believe that the ban would hinder the economic and agricultural progress of the nation. In short, some members of the Hindu intelligentsia view even a religious agitation such as this from a rational viewpoint.

The differential characteristic of an intellectual is that he always analyses problems rationally. If this criterion were to be applied to the so-called Muslim intellectuals we would be sorely disappointed. It would soon become apparent that the 'Muslim intellectual' is not an intellectual in the real sense of the term. He is merely a Muslim. I would cite two examples in support of my observation.

In 1953, the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan published an abridged edition of the book *Living Prophets* published originally by Thomas and Thomas. Indian Muslims objected to the book on the ground that it contained some misleading statements about the Prophet Muhammad. However, they did not stop at that. They demanded a ban on the book. In fact, they launched a nation-wide agitation to demand enforcement of the ban. It is significant that there was not a single Muslim intellectual in the country to point out that the agitation had an entirely wrong basis, that other people had a right to express their opinions—even if they were wrong opinions and even if they were opinions about the Prophet. When the holy hair enshrined at Hazratbal was found missing, the same attitude was laid bare. I would have been happy if at that time some Muslim intellectual had the courage to point out that it was wrong to give the hair such great importance, and it was certainly senseless that the whole of the Kashmir administration should be brought to a stand still because of the missing hair. But the unfortunate fact remains that not a single intellectual from among the number of Muslims who style themselves as intellectuals had the courage to speak out openly on this occasion.

A personal experience of mine throws light on a different aspect of this issue. At that time I wanted to express the views which I have stated above. But when I wrote an article on the subject and took it to the editor of a journal, he refused to

publish it. In fact, he retorted: "Do you want me to have a Muslim demonstration storming my office?" It is hardly necessary to add that the gentleman was a Hindu. A Hindu is used to playing several roles and he is an expert in assuming different forms on different occasions. I have already referred to Hindu intellectuals and given the due praise. But I must frankly state that there is a kind of Hindu who is always terrified when he thinks of Muslims. This is no doubt a shameful state of affairs. At every critical moment this particular type of Hindu pretends to be more of a Muslim than a Muslim himself, and thwarts the attempts of those who are trying to make the average Muslim less of a fanatic.

The real obstacle in the way of secular integration is the vast gulf that separates the intelligentsia of the two communities. An intellectual minority always helps to shape the rest of society on proper lines. It helps to establish a necessary equilibrium. It leads progressive movements in the society. It effectively fights obstinate revivalists. It continuously accepts fresh ideas and welcomes new values. It examines values on the basis of its own rationality. It is conscious of its own faults and shortcomings before it criticizes the defects of others. An intellectual has the capacity for critical introspection. His approach is dispassionate and analytical. The progress of a society is measured by the existence and size of its intellectual minority.

However, such a class does not come into existence in a society all too easily. It is the product of several complex historical, social, political and other processes. Exposure to such processes helps to create a tolerant attitude which is necessary for the existence of an intellectual minority and its movement. Hindu society has gone through such a process. It has withstood the critical pressures inherent in this process. It has therefore been able to give rise to a class of self-critical,

liberal intellectuals. The Muslim community in India has not undergone such a process of transformation. It is just about to enter a phase in which this process begins. That is why I consider it a remote possibility that I shall be able to discuss this problem with Muslim leaders whose arguments are at present predictably obstinate.

I do not, however, mean that there are no rational individuals among the Indian Muslims. There are a few exceptional individuals who can think dispassionately and in a secular manner. They are examples of a progressive Muslim mind, but a handful of such people do not make a liberal intellectual class and it is not possible for isolated individuals to have any appreciable effect on society. These people cannot create a movement in the Indian Muslim community because they do not have a place in the community. The moment they became liberals they lost the confidence of their backward and orthodox community. Hindu liberals have been far more fortunate. Nehru is an example. In 1946, when anti-Muslim riots erupted in the State of Bihar, Nehru threatened to bomb the rioting Hindus if they would not stop their violence; and yet the Hindus continued to accept Nehru as their leader. In spite of partition, Nehru gave this nation a secular constitution; he gave Muslims equal rights; and yet a large majority of Hindus accepted him as their leader. One can cite numerous examples of this sort. Mr Nirad C. Chaudhury is another example. In his book *The Continent of Circe,* Mr Chaudhury has discussed what he considers the decadence of the Hindu mind. He has attacked the Hindus by calling them degenerate and yet Hindus consider him one of themselves. But the situation with the Muslims is different. Maulana Azad opposed Pakistan and it would be interesting to recall how he was greeted by the Muslims for that. This was twenty years ago. What status has Mr Chagla today in the Indian Muslim community? We

know what storm of criticism he had to brave when he proposed the Aligarh University Bill. As long as such a vital difference exists between the mental make-ups of the two communities, Hindu-Muslim tensions are not likely to abate. I think this difference between the two communities is in the nature of a disparity of cultural levels. The wide cultural gulf that separates the two must be bridged. Compared to the Hindus, the Muslims today are culturally backward. They ought to be brought on a level with the Hindus. This would imply the creation of a liberal class in the Muslim community. The Indian Muslims today need, most urgently, a liberal movement.

I do not think that a fruitful discussion of this subject between Hindu and Muslim leaders and intellectuals is going to be possible for another decade or two. Then there will be a meaningful dialogue between the two communities. And when this happens Indian Muslims will have already found an equilibrium. I do visualize the creation, in the near future, of a class of liberals among Indian Muslims. I am not saying this simply because I am an optimist. I feel that after about twenty years Indian Muslims will have the benefit of a new leadership. Such a leadership will not talk of protecting the 'religious' interests of Muslims. It would be a leadership leading different classes and strata of Indian society as a whole.

I shall give only one example of the kind of leadership I have in view, the example provided by Mr George Fernandez. Mr George Fernandez is a Catholic by faith but his faith does not intrude into his social and political life. He is a leader of the working class. He talks not of defending 'Catholic' interests but rather of defending the interests of the working class. People may assess Mr Fernandez's political work in different ways, what is relevant here is the fact that he does not represent the 'religious' interests of Catholics when he speaks as a social and political leader. When he speaks of removing English as the

medium of administrative and public communication, he forgets that he is a Catholic. He did not attend the Eucharistic Congress held in Bombay. It is irrelevant whether or not in his personal life he is religious. What is important is the fact that he does not bring his religious interests into public life. I hope that in future Indian Muslims too will have such a leadership. Today they do not have it. In fact, even those Muslim leaders who call themselves Marxists pollute public life with religious interests. Mr Mohammad Iliyas, a Right Communist leader of West Bengal, is a case in point. He styles himself as a working class leader. However, in 1967 he led a demonstration of Muslim devotees seeking to assert their right to offer prayers at a place the ownership of which was in dispute. He led this demonstration on a Friday—the day on which Muslims offer mass prayers. It is important to remember that Mr Iliyas did not pause to consider that dispute about the ownership of the place was *sub judice*. In order to justify his action Mr Iliyas, who had no patience to wait for the verdict of a court of law, made the curious claim that he was defending religious freedom and was therefore defending the fundamental rights of aggrieved citizens. But surely, Mr Iliyas's 'Marxism', which defines religious freedom as the right to trespass on disputed property even as a court of law is about to settle the dispute, is an odd kind of Marxism!

❐❐❐

Muslim Opposition to Secular Integration
Nature, Causes and Remedies

Secularism implies a dissociation of religious considerations from political and social life. The modern view of man and society includes a secular attitude to all political and social activities. It does not insist on abolishing religion altogether but regards religion as a matter of personal faith. The ethical values on which modern secular society is based are secular ethical values which are rationally derived. Religions may or may not contain notions of fundamental human rights as we understand them today. As modern men, we do not rely on religion for deriving our concept of social conscience. Our social conscience is inherent in the democratic system of government we have accepted. The democratic ethic is liberal and is therefore heterodox. It is thus necessary for a democracy to be secular, that is, totally dissociated from religion, to be a democracy at all. All communities and individuals in a democratic society have to conform to the basic liberal democratic ethic.

In many instances, we witness an inevitable conflict between human rights and religion-based social attitudes. In such a situation, the only choice we have as modern democrats is to eliminate the obstacles to democracy created by certain religious attitudes. The very fact that in India we call Muslims a minority and Hindus the majority implies a non-secular attitude. Yet all political parties seem to regard this as a proper division. A secular distinction between people would be in the nature of a class distinction. For instance, a leader of the working class is a secular leader; a leader of Hindus or Muslims is not.

Secularism in India, although embodied in the Constitution, is as yet only an aspiration. It has not yet permeated our social life. It is even in danger today. Within the Hindu majority, there is a strong obscurantist revivalist movement against which we find a very small class of liberals engaged in fighting it. Among Indian Muslims there is no such liberal minority leading the movement towards democratic liberalism. Unless Indian liberals, however small they are as a minority, are drawn from all communities and join forces on a secular basis, even the Hindu liberal minority will eventually lose its battle with communalist and revivalist Hindus. If Muslims are to be integrated in the fabric of a secular and integrated Indian society, a necessary precondition is to have a class of Muslim liberals who would continuously assail communalist dogmas and tendencies. Such Muslim liberals, along with Hindu liberals and others, would comprise a class of modern Indian liberals.

Liberal intellectuals emerge in any society only through a long and complex social, cultural, political, and historical process. Today Hindus have an influential liberal elite only because Hinduism is historically heterodox and can accommodate dissent. The modern Indian liberal tradition starts from Raja Rammohan Roy, who was a product of Hindu society. It leads through such secular (as against Hindu) liberals as Nehru to the present time.

The target of Hindu liberals has been Hindu orthodoxy. And due to their continuous critical evaluation and leadership in social reform, Hindu society as a whole has been benefited to a certain extent. I do not wish to suggest here that Hindu society has accepted the liberal democratic ethic and has modernized itself to any satisfactory extent; it has not. But this continuing liberal tradition places the Hindu community in a culturally better position than that of Muslims in India.

Why do Muslims in India lack a liberal elite? The answer has many facets. But one thing is certain. The explanation of Muslim backwardness is to be found in the very make-up of the Muslim mind.

Indian Muslims believe that they are a perfect society and are superior to all other communities in India. One of the grounds for this belief is the assumption that the Islamic faith embodies the vision of a perfect society and, therefore, being a perfect Muslim implies not having to make any further progress. This is an unacceptable claim by modern criteria.

Islamic personal law runs contrary to the modern notions of human rights. Its anomalies are obvious to anyone except Muslim males and need not be detailed here.

The second reason for this belief is the fact that Indian Muslims resent being a minority and still dream of spreading their faith throughout India or at least of ruling India. They suffer from delusions of grandeur and also from a persecution mania. I can cite a number of examples of this from the Muslim press in India and the statements of leaders of the Jamaat-e-Islami and the Majlis-e-Mushawarat. Another reason for this belief is found in the pre-partition history of Muslim politics in India. Muslims have always believed that they are a state within a state and a society within a society. Their ideas of representation are based on this claim and therefore they run contrary to the concept of a democratic society itself. Today they believe in a parallel co-existence with the majority with complete autonomy as a community. This explains their resistance to a change in their personal law. But, going even further, Indian Muslims oppose family planning because they are obsessed with the idea of increasing their numbers to be effective in power politics. This is the same old dangerous attitude as led to the demand for, and creation of, Pakistan. Their sense of loyalty to Pakistan, that is, their view of the

Kashmir problem and their defence of infiltrators in States like Assam, is another aspect of this anti-secular view. Their failure to identify themselves as Indians becomes obvious in these and many other ways.

The only leadership Indian Muslims have is basically communalist. An exceptional Muslim liberal like M. C. Chagla has no place in Indian Muslim society. Nor will individual modern liberals suffice. Indian Muslims today need an *avant garde* liberal elite to lead them. This elite must identify itself with other modern liberals in India and must collaborate with it against Muslim as well as Hindu communalism. Unless a Muslim liberal intellectual class emerges, Indian Muslims will continue to cling to obscurantist medievalism, communalism, and will eventually perish both socially and culturally. A worse possibility is that of Hindu revivalism destroying even Hindu liberalism, for the latter can succeed only with the support of Muslim liberals who would modernize Muslims and try to impress upon them secular democratic ideals.

I believe that the only remedy to Muslim communalism is an enlightened liberal intellectual leadership. This leadership, to have credibility and persuasive power, must emerge from amongst the Indian Muslims themselves. The first task of such a liberal leadership would be to destroy the hold of communalist leadership over Indian Muslim masses. The influence of organizations such as the Jamaat-e-Islami, the Majlis-e-Mushawarat and Tamir-e-Milat has to be eliminated. So-called 'nationalist' Muslims, who are basically communalist, must be exposed. Also, Muslims who are today leaders of political parties such as the Right Communist but like Mr Mohammed Iliyas of West Bengal are proven communalists, must be exposed. The *ulema* must be prevented from propagating anti-national ideas in the name of religion. The communalist Muslim press must be rendered ineffective. In

short, the pervasive influence of all kinds of communalists has to be rendered ineffective.

There are some Muslims who are members of the Indian elite but who are afraid of their own community's reaction to modern attitudes. These uncommitted and hypocritical liberals are not only of no use, but are also a hindrance to the progress of Indian Muslims. They are either moral cowards or are apathetic to a great social problem which is also a problem of democracy in India. They must make a choice now. If they do not provide liberal intellectual leadership to Indian Muslims, the younger generation has to commit itself and carry out this task. It is often argued that Muslim communalism is only a reaction to Hindu communalism. This is not true. The real conflict in India today is between all types of obscurantism, dogmatism, revivalism, and traditionalism on one side and modern liberalism on the other. Indian politicians being short-sighted and opportunistic, communalism and orthodoxy is always appeased and seldom, if ever, opposed. This is why we need an agreement among all liberal intellectuals to create a non-political movement against all forms of communalism. If this is not done, democracy and liberalism will inevitably collapse in India. The stakes are high. It is a pity that few people realize the gravity of the situation. It is even more unfortunate that they are hardly informed about the true nature of the problem.

❐❐❐

Humanistic Modernism the Only Solution

In the preceding chapters I have discussed the nature of the Indian Muslim problem. In this context, one ought to consider Hindu communalism. However, I believe that Hindu communalism in India has sprung up primarily as a reaction to Muslim communalism. If Muslim communalism is effectively eliminated, the root cause of Hindu communalism will be destroyed.

This is not the only reason why I consider these two forms of communalism on different levels. As I have stated earlier, the Hindu community already has within it an influential liberal elite which is conscious of fundamental human values and is committed to them. This small but influential class of liberals continuously fights Hindu communalism. Such a liberal elite does not exist among the Indian Muslims. This is the chief reason why I do not regard the two communalist forces as being on the same level. Basically, Muslim communalism is aggressive and expansionist; Hindu communalism is a defensive reaction. However hard Hindu communalist leaders may try, they cannot make Hindu communalism aggressive beyond certain limits. By its very nature, Hindu society is not well-knit. Liberal Hindus are well organised and they are continuously trying to check aggressive communalism. Even during the post-partition days when communal feelings ran high, Hindu communalists could not subjugate the forces of secular nationalism among the Hindus.

However, the Hindu assumes various forms. It will be useful to study the Hindu mind in contrast with the Muslim mind. Hindu society allows free expression. This opens out a certain inlet for new and different ideas. A Hindu can take up

extremely wrong positions at times and even try to propagate highly non-conformist views. Such a wrong-headed Hindu can even muster up some support. As a result, we simultaneously find among the Hindus people who are extremely tolerant and humanistic and also others who are extremely cruel and narrow-minded. The Hindu wears many masks. In a sense, Hindu society is a multi-headed organism. Sometimes this creates great complications. It also explains the indecision and the ambivalence of the Hindu mind. It postpones decisions and avoids frankness. At the same time, it tries to obtain full credit for its independence of mind.

Of course, there is another side to this. This other side is equally important in the context of Muslim politics and the Hindu-Muslim problem. As I have observed earlier, Gandhi and Nehru had recognised the fact that Hindu society had refused to accept the Muslim challenge. But Hindu communalists failed to recognise this. I must observe here that Hindu society lacks the dynamism without which no national challenge can be faced. For centuries it has been in the doldrums. It is yet to find a direction. I am not referring to the controversies raging in this country today. The real question is whether we have enough dynamism and sense of direction to overcome these controversies. American society has such dynamism and so too the Russian. In comparison to the Russians and Americans, the Europeans are losing their dynamism. And therefore, they are being left behind. It must be remembered that dynamic nations go on extending the spheres of their influence. Sometimes they may expand geographically; sometimes, their expansion is cultural; and sometimes their influence spreads in the form of economic and political influence. Today, India is a shrinking nation in this sense and this points to the lack of dynamism in a majority of Indians. It is not the leadership alone which is responsible for this waning of influence. English society overthrew

Chamberlain to prove how a dynamic society can reject weak leadership. However, even in periods of difficulty we have been unable to overthrow our weak leadership. Our leadership is merely a symbol of the weakness of Indian society as a whole.

Does Muslim society then have such dynamism ? The answer is, 'No.' We have recently witnessed how Arab power shrank up within only twenty-four hours. Nowhere in the world today do we find a dynamic influence of Islamic culture. These are the symptoms of a debilitated society. Islamic dynamism is preoccupied only with spreading religion. Muslims call this dynamism; in fact, it is only a hang-over of barbaric medievalism and it contains the seeds of its own destruction.

How then are we going to explain the spectacle of the Hindus' helplessness in the face of Indian Muslims ? The creation of Pakistan cannot be attributed to Muslim dynamism. Pakistan was created by the Muslims in collusion with a third party. It is a sealed chapter now. However, the conflict continues. It is a conflict of two attitudes. The Muslim mind is basically expansionist because it dreams of religious expansion. The Hindu is conservative. He would not transcend self-imposed limitations. This habit of the Hindu is sometimes expressed in an absurd form. He decides not to enter Kashmir which is a part of his own nation. He refuses to allow everyone, including himself, to enter Naga territory. These are symptoms of decadence.

When I talk of expansionism, I should not be misunderstood as its advocate. I am not suggesting that a society ought to be expansionist. After all, the modern conscience provides a yard-stick to determine what kind of expansion is ethically justifiable. I expect a dynamic Hindu society of the future to develop a modern conscience. I believe that if the Hindus were sufficiently dynamic, the Hindu-Muslim problem would be solved. For if the Hindus were

dynamic, they would subject the Indian Muslims to several shocks which history has spared them. Muslims would be left with the one stark alternative to perish if they did not wish to change. And any society prefers change to extinction. Hindus can accept the challenge of Muslim politics in India only by developing dynamism and a balance of mind. But to develop such dynamism Hindu orthodoxy itself has to be liquidated. The caste system has to be eliminated. The Hindus must embrace modernism. They must create a society based on fundamental human values and the concept of true social equality. Unfortunately, the Hindu mind lacks balance.

Even those Hindus who have accepted modernity, justice and brotherhood as their guiding principles sometimes support Muslim communalism. Some avoid speaking against it and some even indirectly encourage it. Those Hindus who ought to be combating communalism today seem, instead, to be trying to put the clock back. They are supporting obscurantism, revivalism, the caste system and the cult of the cow. This is a process which would drain Hindu society of whatever little dynamism it may still have. There have to be enough Hindus trying to modernize the Hindu society and, at the same time, opposing the irrational politics of Muslim communalism. I hope this would happen. For that would precisely be the process by which the Hindu-Muslim problem can be eliminated. Muslim communalism today makes the most of the rift between liberal Hindus and communalist Hindus. It is ironical that Muslim communalists gain the support of Hindus, both liberal and communalist. The Muslim communalist demand for making Urdu a second official language in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar has been supported by the so-called modernist Hindus under the impressive label of secularism. The 'secularism' of such Hindus encourages the anti-secularism of the Muslims. These so-called secularist Hindus are opposed to the creation of a common personal law

because it might displease the Muslims. They support Sheikh Abdulla and suggest measures which are bound to result in giving Kashmir over to Pakistan to settle our disputes with that country. When members of the Jamaat-e-Islami are arrested for demonstrating against President Nasser in New Delhi, these 'secularist' Hindus promptly protest. They back the Muslim agitation against the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, publishers of the controversial book on the Prophet. When Hamid Dalwai's novel *Indhan* ('Fuel') raises a storm of protest from Muslim fanatics, these so-called Hindu secularists would support the fanatics and oppose Hamid Dalwai. When Mr Chagla attempts to straighten up the communalist twist given to the Aligarh University issue, under the pretence of being anti-Congress the secularist Hindus would just sit on the fence. Such, in short, are the ways of the so-called secular Hindu.

Consider, next, the orthodox Hindu. He stages an agitation against the proposed removal of the word 'Hindu' from Banaras University, and secures the support of the Muslim League. He would start an agitation for a ban on cow-slaughter and Muslim communalists would support even that. For when they support him on such issues, both of them can establish a united front against Mr Chagla, and then the Muslim communalist would also be left free to stage nation-wide agitations for a re-display of the Prophet's lost hair. He can bully critics of the Prophet. In short, he will always turn Hindu revivalism to his own benefit. It must be remembered that the obscurantism of one community helps to strengthen the obscurantism of other communities. If Hindu obscurantism is attacked and eliminated, it would also be a strong blow to Muslim obscurantism.

Who then is really fighting Muslim communalism ? The answer is, a handful of modern Muslims. Mr Chagla in fact leads the modern liberal Muslims. And all of us know Mr Chagla's situation now. He is opposed by the Muslims and unsupported by the Hindus.

There is no doubt that the picture I have painted of Indian Muslims is terrible. But it is true. One would be deceiving oneself if one tried to believe it was otherwise.

This, however, is what we observe on the surface. On the surface, Muslim society appears to be medieval in its make-up. Yet, somewhere deep down, a change is taking place in this society. There is nothing dramatic about this change. It is largely imperceptible and indeed very slow. It is a process which began quite a few years ago. It has still to cover many stages before it reaches its completion. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan represents the first phase in the modernization of Indian Muslims. He wanted to modernize the Muslims although he was still opposed to the Hindus. Jinnah and Iqbal represent the second phase. In the beginning, neither Jinnah nor Iqbal was anti-Hindu. However later they began to talk in the name of Islam and this Islamism ultimately led to anti-Hinduism. This is where the process of Muslim modernization was arrested. The Hindus, on the other hand, had progressed much further. Raja Rammohun Roy represents the first phase of Hindu modernism. Many of his views were similar to those later held by Sir Syed Ahmed Khan. For instance, the Raja, like Sir Syed, thought that British rule was a divine gift to India. Savarkar represents the second phase; he wanted to modernize Hindu society, although he seemed to emphasize technological modernity more than scientific outlook out of pragmatic considerations. Nehru represents the third phase. Nehru was modern in that he was firmly committed to democracy and the values of an open society. It is interesting to see that the Hindus had a Savarkar and a Nehru almost simultaneously. The two phases overlapped. Muslims in India have yet to produce their Nehru or even Savarkar.

However, a new generation of Muslims is emerging in India today. One can see the first glimmers of a genuine modern humanism in them. In the vast mass of a medieval Muslim

society one witnesses a few young Muslims who have a modern, humanistic and rational attitude. They are still scattered and isolated like islands in a vast ocean. Their modernity is reflected in what they speak and write. It is seen in their actions.

It may be useful to cite a few examples. Some educated Indian Muslims show the signs of a newly emerging attitude of unbiased detachment. For instance, Professor Mohammad Yasin's book, *Social History of Islamic India*, Professor Athar Rizvi's work analysing Muslim revivalism in the 16th and 17th centuries, and Professor M. Mujeeb's book *Indian Muslims*, reveal a new attitude of critical detachment. This kind of modern attitude is also shared by Professor Mohammad Habib and the Head of the Department of Political Science at Osmania University, Dr Rashiduddin Khan. During my recent visit to Aligarh I had a chance to meet and talk to some men and women students as well as some of the teaching staff. Even among them I found the hopeful signs of a critically introspective attitude. In many cities in Northern India not only is the purdah fast disappearing but there is also a rapid spread of education among Muslim women. Many of these have married men of other faiths. It is significant to note that these men of other religions who married Muslim women were not urged to become Muslims. All these trends indicate the emergence of modernity among Indian Muslims.

Are we going to welcome these new trends ? Are we going to encourage them and let them flourish ? This is what we have to decide now. We have to check Pakistani expansionism and protect our borders. We have to adopt a clear and decisive long-range policy towards Pakistan. We have to support Muslim modernism in India. We have to insist on a common personal law for all citizens of India. All marriages in India must be registered under a common Civil Code. Religious conversion should not be allowed, except when the intending convert is an adult and the conversion takes place before a

magistrate. Children born of inter-religious marriages should be free to practise any religion but only after they reach legal adulthood. If either a *dargah* or a temple obstructs the passage of traffic on a thoroughfare, it ought to be removed. Government should have control over the income of all religious property. The income should be spent on education and public welfare alone. It should not be obligatory to mention one's religion and caste (even today, the admission form used in schools compels students to state their religion). The Banaras and Aligarh Universities should be declared national institutions of higher learning and their constitutions should be modified for the purpose. The special status given to Kashmir should be scrapped. All Indian citizens should be free to visit Nagaland. There should be opportunities for the development of Urdu; even schools which use Urdu as medium of instruction should have full protection. However, the demand for giving Urdu the status of the second official language of a State should be firmly resisted. The status of all Indian women should be governed by a single, common Civil Code. The purdah should be legally banned. The question of a ban on cow-slaughter should be settled strictly with reference to the agricultural and economic development of the country. Family planning should be made compulsory for all, for example, by compulsory sterilization of one of the partners after the birth of the third child. Those Muslims who oppose these reforms should not be entitled to full citizenship rights. For instance, they should have no right to vote. They should not be eligible for receiving the benefits of any social welfare scheme. Those Muslims who oppose reform on the ground of religion should be governed strictly according to the Shariat law in its entirety. For example, if they are caught stealing, their hands should be cut off in public. If they speak a falsehood, they should be publicly whipped. A Muslim woman who is found guilty of adultery should be stoned to death in

public. I hope those who insist on following the Shariat law will not indeed find this separate code of crime and punishment for orthodox Muslims outdated. If so, they should not seek to apply the Shariat only partially.

The only answer to the communal problem in India is secular integration of all the peoples of India. If the question is viewed in this light, liberal Muslim modernism would be strengthened. Today we have a suitable climate for the emergence of a strong modernist movement among the Muslims. Muslims no more enjoy power. Muslim orthodoxy without power is like a serpent without its poison fangs; only its tail would wriggle. In future we need not discuss the Hindu-Muslim problem. We should discuss a common Civil Code and launch a movement for it.

For all this to happen, the present division among the Hindus should cease to exist. Those Hindus who want to counter Muslim communalism unfortunately try to strengthen Hindu revivalism. And those Hindus who went to lead the Hindus and ultimately the whole of this nation on the way of modernity are unfortunately supporting Muslim communalists. This has to change. I am on the side of all Hindus who oppose Muslim communalism; but when the same Hindus help Hindu revivalism, I am opposed to them. I support all those who want to modernize the Hindus; but when they adopt a policy of not opposing Muslim communalism, I oppose them. If the Hindus develop a proper balance of mind, I believe the present tensions would soon begin to resolve.

❐❐❐

Indian Muslims at the Crossroads*

Let me at the outset thank the Indian Secular Society for the great honour they have done me in asking me to preside over this Conference. Friends who have gathered here from various parts of India are united with each other and with the Indian Secular Society by the common bond of a shared point of view. I also share this point of view and I feel happy and proud to belong to this fraternity. We are here to pursue the possibility of bringing on a common all-India platform all Muslims who are convinced that modernization of Muslim society is the only effective way of solving its problems. The establishment of such a platform will help Muslims to emerge from their present condition of isolation and despair, give them a new hope and courage, and give them a lead in tackling their own problems and the problems of the country from the secular point of view, within the framework of a free, egalitarian, secular society. It is this thought and hope which lie behind the effort to organize this Conference.

I do not want to enter into the bitter and tragic history of Hindu-Muslim tensions in this sub-continent, leading to the acceptance of partition as a remedy which has proved worse than the disease. It is a familiar enough story. What is more pertinent is the fact that the Muslim society has not been able successfully to face the challenges with which it was confronted in post-independence India. We must identify the causes of this failure, for in the absence of this understanding it will not be possible for us to deal effectively with our problems.

*Presidential address at the First All-India Conference of Forward-Looking Muslims held at Delhi in December 4-5, 1971

Before Independence, all sections of Indian Muslims were united in the belief that establishment of a separate state of their own was a panacea for all their problems. There were different currents of thought prevalent in different sections and strata of the Muslim society though most of them converged on the demand for Pakistan. One line of thinking was that as Muslims were denied recognition as a political entity enjoying parity with the majority, they were left with no alternative to establishing a state of their own. Others thought that in a united India Muslims all over the sub-continent were bound to remain perpetually at the mercy of the Hindu community. The establishment of the sovereign state of Pakistan would not only liberate a section of Muslims from this thraldom, it would also bring, about some kind of parity between Hindus and Muslims by reducing both communities to the position of a minority in one of the two successor states. Muslims who were to remain in India were called upon to sacrifice their security and welfare to ensure a glorious future for fellow Muslims who would constitute the majority in Pakistan. But they were also assured that the establishment of Pakistan was the only way in which their safety and welfare could be assured. Hindus in Pakistan would be hostages to a secure future for Muslims in India and, the more fair-minded among the champions of this theory would perhaps have added, vice versa. A few liberal, secular Muslim leaders did raise their voice against separatist Muslim nationalism but it remained feeble.

I do not claim to be conversant with the subtleties of sophisticated political theory. I am not a thinker or a theoretician or an academician. I am an ordinary social worker, and have some concern for the state of the society to which I belong. I want merely to place before you the conclusions forced on me by my experience of the Muslim mind and its dominant attitudes, which I have gathered in the course of

my social work. The conclusion appears to be inescapable to me that the reasons I have just enumerated are not the only or even the most powerful ones which impelled Muslim society to adopt the doctrine of its separate nationhood. Any such belief would amount to nothing less than self-deception on the part of Muslims. That Muslim society is a nation in itself is a belief firmly rooted in the Muslim mind. History tells us that a people who believe themselves to be a nation will not rest till they have made their nationhood a reality in the form of a politically sovereign state. The demand for a sovereign state as an embodiment of its separate nationhood is made irrespective of whether the people have received just or unjust treatment at the hands of others. Obviously such a state can come into existence only in a territory in which this people has a majority. This accounts for the emergence of Pakistan as a sovereign state and its boundaries. To imagine that a section of the people who till the other day fervently believed in their separate nationhood would readily and entirely shed this belief merely because it finds itself in the position of a numerical minority in India would not only be to fly in the face of human nature; it will also give us a distorted picture of the nature of the problems facing Indian Muslims.

Any discerning spectator will be convinced that Muslim politics in the post-independence era continues to be based on the conception that Muslims constitute a separate nation. The persistent attempts to organize Muslims into a solid political group cannot be explained in any other way. Muslims continue to regard themselves as an autonomous society within the nation. It is quite true that partition far from proving to be a solution to the Muslim problem has only aggravated it. But it is simply not true that there was a happy solution waiting round the corner only if partition had been avoided. For the Muslims demanded parity as the price for remaining in a politically united India and surely this was an impossible

demand. There is no precedent anywhere in the world for granting parity to a minority or any group. The only unexceptionable way to integrate a minority of people within a nation is to grant equal citizenship to everyone.

The reasons why partition aggravated the problems of Indian Muslims are many. In the first place the relations between Pakistan and India were never happy. And there is no hope of their improving so long as the rulers of Pakistan are not prepared to give up their territorial ambitions and their age-old anti-Hindu prejudices. Now that the revolt in Bangladesh is threatening the very existence and unity of Pakistan, Indo-Pak relations have ceased to have any relevance to the problem of the security and future of Indian Muslims. There is a real possibility that the emergence of Bangladesh as a sovereign, democratic state will give a new and hopeful turn to Hindu-Muslim relations. Whatever validity the obnoxious 'hostages' theory ever had has been drained away by the fiendish decimation of Hindus in Pakistan. Within three months of the creation of Pakistan almost all Hindus and Sikhs were driven out of West Pakistan. Then started a steady exodus of Hindus from East Bengal with occasional spurts. Of the nearly 10,000,000 refugees who have fled from the terror deliberately let loose by the Pakistani army in Bangladesh to crush the freedom struggle, 6,500,000 are Hindus. The number of Hindus and Sikhs residing in Pakistan when it came into existence was 16,000,000. Bearing in mind the rate of growth of population in this sub-continent, their strength should have gone up during the last 24 years to about 25,000,000. If one takes into account the number of recent Hindu refugees who have crossed into India, the total strength of the Hindus left in Pakistan cannot be put higher than 3,500,000. This means that Pakistan expelled more than 75 per cent of its minorities. As against this there were 40,000,000 Muslims in India at the time of partition. According to the

1971 census this figure has gone up to 63,000,000. One of the ostensible reasons behind the demand for separate state for Muslims was their fear that they would never receive justice at the hands of the Hindus who would always enjoy a brute majority in undivided India. It will be difficult to say that the Islamic state of Pakistan has set a model of fair and generous treatment of minorities.

The response of Indian Muslims to the struggle for liberation of Bangladesh has also been rather strange. Apart from a few stray individuals and some minor organizations all Muslim organizations have rushed to the defence of and have been at considerable pains to justify and even extol the actions of the ruling junta in West Pakistan. Muslims resent the remark that they do not yet seem to have joined without reservations the mainstream of Indian national life. But the fact that when the entire people of India and all political parties are united in supporting the heroic struggle for democracy and human rights that is going on in Bangladesh, only the Muslim public opinion should sound a discordant note seems clearly to indicate that Muslims have not yet identified themselves with the mainstream of the national life.

It is against the background of these facts that I would like to offer a few remarks on some of the problems facing Indian Muslims. It appears to me that the main challenge before the Muslim community in India is to establish relations with other communities on the basis of equality within the framework of a secular nation. It is a sad fact that Muslims have not yet faced up to this challenge. Nor have they shown the courage necessary for transforming their tradition-bound social structure in accordance with the modern values of individual freedom and social equality. Transformation of the Muslim society and establishment of egalitarian relations with non-Muslim communities in India are not so much distinct challenges as two sides of the same challenge. For the Muslim

reluctance to face them is basically due to their rejection of the concept of equality of individuals. It will just not do to brush aside such criticism by repeating the stock assertion that Islam was the first religion to preach and practise equality. In fact, no religion has shown much concern for the rights of the individual and Islam is no exception. Islam discriminates between men and women, and the awareness of the distinction between a believer and non-believer has always been rather intense in the Muslim mind. Islamic doctrine does recognise and sanction this distinction and it has often found extreme expression in the actual practice of Muslim individuals and groups. Whenever Muslims are in a majority they have refused to recognize the equal rights of non-Muslim minorities and where they are in a minority they have been generally reluctant to regard themselves as part and parcel of a non-religious nation. The recent revolts of Muslims in the Philippines, Thailand and Ethiopia are merely expressions of the Muslim unwillingness to participate in a common social order on equal terms with others and this unwillingness is rooted in a long and deeply entrenched historical and religious tradition.

It will be useful to examine this question in depth. The fact that Muslims constantly raise the flag of separate nationhood has something to do with the form Muslim society assumed when Islam first became established as a distinct religion. Right from its beginning Islam has been characterised by unification of spiritual authority and temporal power. Muslim society has therefore become historically conditioned to regard sovereign political power as one of its inalienable rights. This is the real reason why when Muslims are in a minority in a country they are generally at odds with its nationalism which seeks to integrate its diverse elements into a common nation. The demand for Pakistan can be traced to this historically conditioned mentality. The restiveness of Muslims in the Philippines, Thailand and Ethiopia which

occasionally express itself in open rebellion is rooted in the same mentality as also accounts for the separation of Indian Muslims.

It must be emphasized that it is not a feature peculiar to the Muslim society that its mind and outlook have been conditioned by its history and traditions. There was a time when the Christian society exhibited this feature and so did the Hindu society until very recently. However, the Christian society has succeeded in emancipating itself from the narrowness and particularism of its tradition and in basing itself on universal human values. This it could do because of the powerful impact made on it by the movement of renaissance which proclaimed the values of free, critical inquiry and human creativity. The Hindu society is also progressing steadily if slowly in the same direction. If the Muslim society is also doing so it must be confessed that its progress is so slow as to be almost imperceptible. One example should suffice to illustrate the point I am making. When the recent exodus from Bangladesh started Christian missionary organisations were the first to rush to the scene to alleviate suffering. The Ramkrishna Mission have a long tradition of bringing succour and solace to the victims of man-made or natural calamities irrespective of their caste and creed. The Rarnkrishna Mission has also been working in the same spirit in this sub-continent. But it is significant that there is no Muslim religious organisation which works in the same spirit, trying to help human beings in distress irrespective of their caste or creed. It is significant because it is symptomatic of the lack of concern for human values displayed by contemporary Muslim society.

By and large Muslims have not yet mentally accepted the need for the separation of religion from Government and the state. Theologians refuse to countenance such separation and even educated Muslims on whom their religious faith sits lightly but who are prone to seek mental security in a collectivist

Muslim nationalism reject it. It would be wrong to conclude that just because educated Muslims are not very religious they must therefore be secular. Jinnah was not particularly religious but neither was he secular. And it would appear that the thought and actions of the educated Indian Muslims have been profoundly influenced by the example of Jinnah, whom they seem to have taken as a model. Jinnah, because of his loyalty to Muslim collectivism continued even after the creation of Pakistan, to be exclusively concerned with the welfare of the Muslims. Even today eminent political leaders like Dr A. J. Faridi, Mr Baddruddin Tyabji, Sheikh Abdulla, Mr Mohammed Ismail and political commentators like Mr A. G. Noorani continue to play the same game with varying skill and finesse.

This tendency to accord supremacy to a collectivist loyalty to Islam, to which every other consideration is sought to be subordinated, and the resulting indifference to human values are by no means confined to Indian Muslims alone. Muslim communities everywhere in the world display the same attitude. When Muslims stage a revolt m the Philippines, or when there is a riot in Ahmedabad, the chief theologian of the Al Azhar University of Cairo raises his voice in protest, bemoans the massacre of Muslims and condemns the governments of the Philippines and India. But when West Pakistanis, who after all constitute a minority of the population of Pakistan, massacre East Bengalis the same divine feels no hesitation in defending this human action as necessary for maintaining the integrity of Pakistan.

Spokesman of Muslim nations and organisations habitually adopt double standards when faced with situations of this kind. This is strikingly illustrated by the curious resolution passed by the Afro-Asian Muslim Conference which met at Jakarta in 1964. This resolution demanded for Muslim minorities in all countries their fundamental rights recognised by the United

Nations Charter of Human Rights. So far, very good. But for non-Muslim minorities in Islamic countries it asked for a fair and just treatment in accordance with the ideals of Islam. This kind of double-talk is sufficient evidence to convince a person like me of the fairness of the remark made by G. E. von Grunebaum in his *Modern Islam* that Muslim society is 'essentially antihumanistic.'

The fact is that Muslim society has not yet thrown up in a significant number individuals who are genuinely committed to liberalism and humanism. It continues to be a tribal society held together by a collectivist loyalty. Even educated Muslims whose religious faith is often skin-deep rarely rise to a broad, humanist outlook. Their sensitivity to human suffering as human suffering is as yet feeble. This is perhaps the reason why even a person like Badshah Khan, who was a close associate of Gandhi, while commenting on current happenings in Pakistan expresses his sorrow over the massacre of Muslims by Muslims. The cruelty to which innocent and helpless Hindus are being subjected is apparently a matter beneath his notice. Some Muslim leaders have indeed made a reference to the atrocities against the Hindus. Such things, according to them, are condemnable because they tarnish the high ideals of Islam. In view of the uniformly unfair treatment meted out by Muslim societies to others everywhere in the world, one feels compelled to ask : What precisely are these high ideals of Islam? Surely the actual practice of the persons following a religion provides a much more reliable guide to its values than their professions. If this criterion is adopted then surely religious fanaticism expressing itself in religious persecution will have considerable claim to be recognised as one of the 'ideals' of Islam.

Curiously enough, this is a point where the two extremes—*viz.* the so-called liberal Muslims and Sanatani Hindus—meet. Sanatani Hindus, while trying their best all the while to make

Hindus intolerant, are constantly proclaiming that tolerance is an essential mark of Hinduism. Gandhiji never asserted that Hindus were, as a matter of fact, tolerant. He only insisted that they should cultivate tolerance. To assert that Muslims in their actual practice are committed to high, humanitarian ideals would amount to fostering the anti-humanitarian tendencies entrenched in the Muslim society. Jinnah, for instance, averred that love of justice was a part of Islam. It is a misfortune of the Muslim society that a Muslim Gandhi who would insist on Muslims cultivating love of justice is yet to be born in it.

The problems of Indian Muslims are rooted in this predicament of Islam. So long as Muslims do not acquire a genuinely secular outlook and concern for human values, so long as they do not develop a capacity for viewing their own problems and the problems of others with whom they have to live in intimacy in the framework of human values, their situation is bound to remain unaltered. The remedies which have been suggested or applied so far were superficial. They never sought to induce in Muslims an introspective mood or to transform radically their outlook. The Muslim mind remains untouched by modern thought and values. I am convinced that a new Muslim mind can emerge only if the Muslim society experiences an authentic renaissance.

While all this is true and needs to be said one must not ignore other relevant aspects of the situation. One must not be so very naive as to imagine that secularising Muslim society will by itself provide a final solution to all their problems. There are situations in which any amount of reason, good sense and accommodation displayed by a minority is of no avail against the fanaticism and exclusiveness of the majority community. Hitler's Germany and Pakistan are examples that come readily to mind. The Jews were either massacred in Germany or flushed out and the fate of Hindus in Pakistan

has not been very dissimilar. What happened in Germany and Pakistan can be understood only in the context of the history and social traditions of these countries. It will not be far-fetched to say that the expulsion of Jews and Christians from Arabia in the reign of Caliph Omar has furnished a precedent sanctioning the expulsion of Hindus from Pakistan. The nightmarish doings in Hitler's Germany which pass belief appear not very unnatural when viewed as the culmination of the deeply rooted racialist, militaristic traditions of Germany which are not without some connection with the teachings of Martin Luther.

I said some time ago that a Muslim Gandhi is yet to be born. It might perhaps be helpful if I explain this remark. Gandhi was not a historical accident. He represented the high watermark of the Hindu renaissance and embodied in his life and work some of its highest impulses and achievements. He symbolised the universalist, humanist outlook towards which this renaissance was steadily working. The activities of Muslim communalists can only have the effect of striking at the roots of this powerful secularist, humanist movement and debilitating it. Even if Hitler's misdeeds were made possible by certain dominant trends in German history it would not do totally to ignore the contribution made towards realising this dark possibility by the fanaticism which marked the Zionist movement. At least some Germans must have been pushed into following Hitler by Jewish extremism. There is, I think, a salutary lesson in this history which Indian Muslims will do well to ponder.

It is necessary to consider the problems facing Indian Muslims in the context of these historical and social currents because it is these currents which determine the possible directions history can take at any critical juncture. It would be unduly naive to suppose that partition and the shameful and tragic events which preceded and followed it could have

been averted only if Gandhi and Jinnah had come to an understanding or if the Congress leaders had done something to satisfy Jinaah's vanity. Individuals can play only a secondary and subordinate role in history. It is the historical forces that determine both the concrete setting within which individuals have to act out the possibilities they can effectively pursue.

If Muslims do not have the courage to confront these historical forces and the religious and social traditions which create and sustain them, they will be able to do very little to help their society to extricate itself from its present predicament. What is necessary is that Muslim society should experience the emancipating and vitalising influence of modern thought. But so long as Muslims are unwilling to consider their tradition, history and religion from a detached point of view and subject them to rational criticism, they will be unable to assimilate modern norms and values. And so long as this does not happen, the hope of any radical and lasting reform is bound to remain futile.

I am aware that the task I am urging you to undertake is not very easy. But I must also add that it is not impossibly difficult. If you will not charge me with excessive vanity, I would like to state that I have been able to work along these lines with some success and I feel quite proud of my achievement. I have been deliberately maligned because of this by interested parties. I have had to face bitter criticism and I have been at least twice subjected to physical assault. I am not saying this in a complaining mood because it is my firm conviction that unless an increasing number of Muslim men and women come forward in a spirit of self-sacrifice to work with courage and patience and determination, they will not be able to lift their society out of the morass into which it has landed itself. I am happy to say that quite a few Muslims in Maharashtra have been steadily working in this direction under the banner of the Muslim Satyashodhak Mandal and

their efforts have not been altogether unfruitful. We can at most claim to have made a breach in the citadel of Muslim communalism and obscurantism which a few years ago appeared to be quite impenetrable. Incidentally, about thirty-five members of the Satyashodhak Mandal are attending this Conference as delegates. The Satyashodak Mandal has also planned to hold a Conference of Muslim women at the end of this month and it is to be hoped that the Conference will mark the begining of an organised struggle by Muslim women against injustice and for elementary human rights. The Mandal has kept a two-fold aim before itself. It aims at bringing about a transformation of Muslim society in accordance with the modern values of freedom and dignity of the individual and social equality. Secondly, it aims at establishing harmonious relations between individual Muslims and individual non-Muslims on the basis of equality within the framework of a secular nation. This, according to it, is the best way to promote national integration. I have made this somewhat detailed reference to the work of the Satyashodak Mandal in the hope that their activities, and, experience may have some relevance to the issues we will be deliberating on in this Conference.

I have no doubt that our collective deliberations will give us a better understanding of the problems of Indian Muslims and some guidelines for future action. I can only hope that the thoughts I have placed before you make even a little contribution towards this end. I once again thank the Indian Secular Society for the honour they have done me and I thank you, ladles and gentlemen, for the indulgence with which you have heard me.

❐❐❐

Failure of a Mission?

Badshah Khan has come and gone, leaving behind him a sense of bewilderment and resentment in the minds of many people in India. The feeling of unqualified respect and affection that greeted him when he arrived had, by the time he left, given way to one of confusion and surprise. Most of his admirers refrained from saying anything critical while he was in India. Apart from other factors, they were also moved by considerations of hospitality. But in the latter part of his stay a number of them began to voice their criticism of some of his statements, particularly on the Hindu-Muslim problem.

Overt criticism apart, the gradual decline in Badshah Khan's popularity was reflected in the size of the audience he attracted at different stages of his tour. On his arrival, about half a million people gathered at the Ramlila grounds at Delhi to accord him a truly massive welcome. When he went to Bombay three months later, hardly ten thousand attended his meeting.

How did this happen? It is not likely that Badshah Khan himself would practise some introspection in order to understand this change in the public attitude. From the way in which he repeated certain controversial statements with great emphasis it would appear that he has strong convictions — a fact which is not conducive to self-examination. However, those who invited him to India in order that their countrymen benefit by his visit cannot evade the responsibility of understanding the phenomenon.

I am afraid things went wrong from the very beginning. The first mistake was the three-day fast that Badshah Khan

undertook soon after he arrived in India. The fast was first supposed to be a protest against the Hindu-Muslim riots in India. Later, it was declared to be a protest against the growth of violence in the country. But It was clear that Badshah Khan's fast was really in protest against the riots in Ahmedabad and some other towns of Gujarat a few days before his arrival.

In the same context Badshah Khan went on expressing one-sided views on the Hindu-Muslim question without thinking of the reactions to which they might lead. It is true that in the beginning he exhorted Muslims not to mix up religion with nationalism and also repeated his criticism of the pre-partition Muslim League. But apart from this the main target of his criticism and exhortation was the Hindu section of the Indian society.

This is not the place to go into a detailed analysis of the Hindu-Muslim problem in India. But it seems that Badshah Khan has not tried to understand the complexities of the problem. The attitudes of both the communities have been shaped by the history of the preceding 800 years and they cannot be changed merely by telling them that religion does not teach hatred of anyone. What is necessary is to examine critically the social and cultural traditions of the two communities based on religion and, indeed, the basic assumption of their doctrines themselves. To say merely that religion does not teach anything wrong is, in such a situation, equivalent to avoiding this responsibility and thus by-passing the real problem. Exhortation may postpone the solution for some time, it cannot provide a substitute for it. This is not to suggest that leaders like Badshah Khan who sincerely believe in the goodness of religion are insincere in their efforts. The point is that a critical examination of the doctrines and role of religion in human society is indispensable for resolving conflict among religious groups. Exhortation, however well-meaning,

is an anachronistic approach. That is why Badshah Khan's effort has proved sterile.

Neither Badshah Khan nor those who arranged his programme in India seem to have realised that in the twenty-two years after independence a new generation of Indians has come of age. It wants new values and new symbols. It is not going to be satisfied with the old, naive and uncritical language and symbols typified by the familiar statement that all religions are good.

The fact that Badshah Khan repeatedly talked of our having forgotten Gandhi is evidence of the lack of understanding of this new awareness. Travelling by third class, plying the *charkha,* and such other symbolic acts had their value during the period of the freedom struggle. But what is more important is the new way of looking at life and its problems that Gandhi showed to his people. It may be that the Hindus have not lived up to this ideal. But surely this would be equally true of the Muslims who never accepted Gandhi during his life time. Also, Gandhi was not the only great teacher to have been forgotten by his followers. The Buddhists have not lived up to the ideal set by the Buddha, nor have Christians been able to forswear violence in accordance with the teachings of Jesus Christ.

That men have failed to be true to the teaching of their Masters should not cause surprise. Indeed, if it were not so, Christ would not have been necessary after the Buddha, nor need Gandhi have been born after Christ. Man is naturally weak and that is why there has been a succession of great men who have sought to make him a human being. This is an unending process and Gandhi was merely a link in it.

However, let us be fair to the Hindus. They have made mistakes and occasionally even committed crimes. But in normal times they subscribe to the ideal that Gandhi placed before them and, once the passions aroused by a crisis have

subsided, they feel ashamed of their lapses. Muslims, on the contrary, have no such ideal before them. It would not be unfair to ask them, 'Who is the great man whose ideal you accept in the modern world ?' No Gandhi has been born among them so far. The Hindus had to produce a Gandhi before they could forget his teachings.

But it is not quite true that the Indian people have completely forgotten Gandhi. The very fact that democratic institutions have survived in India alone among the large number of countries which gained independence after the last World War would mean that Gandhi has left some real impress on the Indian mind. Millions of uneducated Indians have peacefully participated in four General Elections and have brought about peaceful changes of Government since Gandhi died.

This is not something insignificant. True, democracy and secularism found in India suffer from many imperfections. Nor does anyone claim that they are perfect. But let us not forget that they can be improved only through the working of free institutions, and that a remarkable experiment to work them is under way in India. It would be wrong to imagine that this has been possible solely due to the legacy of the British. Pakistan and a number of other countries also inherited a similar legacy, but free institutions did not survive there for long. As regards Pakistan, neither the Muslim League nor Mr Jinnah ever accepted the democratic tradition which the British sought to create in this sub-continent. Pakistan was achieved through riots. In Africa, tribal loyalties proved overwhelmingly powerful. It is only in India that the democratic tradition has been preserved and the credit for this would largely go to Gandhi's teachings through word and deed. Only he could have shown the moral courage to suspend the Chauri Chaura agitation on the outbreak of violence at the hands of his followers.

That is also why violence in India immediately calls forth condemnation by organised public opinion. Law is no doubt broken, but invariably voices of protest are heard against the breach of law. Corruption is prevalent, but those who practise it have to be constantly aware of the Damocles sword hanging over their heads. The conventions of democracy are flouted, but one also witnesses insistence on their observance. All these, I would suggest, are signs of the fact that Gandhi has not been completely forgotten in India.

Nor have a majority of the Indian people forgotten the fact that there are nearly 60 million Muslims in India. It was because of Gandhi's martyrdom that they could continue living in India after partition and were given the opportunity of identifying themselves with the mainstream of India's national life on the basis of equal citizenship. This, again, was made possible by people who believed in the humanist ideal put forward by Gandhi. This would explain why, in spite of practically unceasing provocation from Pakistan, an overwhelming majority of the Hindus are still not hostile to Muslims in India. To see this one has only to consider the fact that whereas the population of Hindus in Pakistan has gone down by nearly forty per cent during the last twenty-two years, that of Muslims in India has increased by nearly forty-five per cent in the same period.

The difference between the two communities does not end here. Wherever Muslims are in a majority, they have denied equal citizenship to non-Muslims. In practically all the Muslim countries only a Muslim can become the head of State according to the Constitution of the country. Even Turkey, which has been rightly praised for attempting large-scale secularisation of Muslim life, has not been free from charges of discrimination against non-Muslims. For instance, Kemal Ataturk claimed to have solved the problem of Turkey's Christian

minority by resorting to genocide. Indeed, the word 'genocide' was first used in the League of Nations during discussion on this action.

Pakistan has not behaved in a different way. Within months of its establishment, it drove away practically all the Hindus from its Western wing. As to the Sikhs, it is now confirmed from a letter written by Sir Francis Mudie to Jinnah that there was a deliberate plan to drive out the Sikhs into India. The atmosphere of terror created in the early stage was kept up through periodical riots which killed or converted large numbers and forced millions of Hindus to migrate. The riots of 1964 again sent nearly a million Hindus for refuge to India.

The fact that no major Hindu-Muslim riot has taken place in Pakistan after 1964 does not mean that the Muslims of Pakistan suddenly became secular after that year's holocaust. Steady persecution of the Hindus has been going on without allowing the facts to come out. Hindus are not now allowed to migrate to India without forfeiting their property to the Government. Nor are they allowed to sell their property except with the prior permission of the Government.

A major reason for preventing Hindus from migrating to India is the Pakistan Government's anxiety over the possible reaction in India. According to Taya Zinkin, who is no enemy of Muslims, for the first time in the history of Hindu-Muslim riots the number of Muslims who were killed in India exceeded that of Hindus killed in Pakistan in the riots of 1964. The Government of Pakistan has now realised that it will have to provide for more Muslim refugees from India than the Hindus they drive away from Pakistan.

Apart from communal riots, the official policy of the Government of Pakistan is also discriminatory towards the Hindus. Since most landlords in East Pakistan were Hindus

and in West Pakistan Muslim, the land legislation enacted by the Pakistan Government permits a much greater ceiling in the Western wing than in the Eastern. It is therefore curious that Badshah Khan should say that the economic condition of the Hindus in East Pakistan is good.

Even in Afghanistan and other Muslim countries Hindus are treated, not as partners in the State but as 'guests' of the nation. A guest has no claim to anything as of right except to what is willingly conceded by the host. Consequently, there is no problem of tension between the local Muslim population and the Hindu 'guests' over any issue of the type that leads to tension between the Whites and the Blacks in the US or the Hindus and Muslims in India. The attitude of the Muslim majority in these countries to the Hindus is precisely what the RSS advocates towards non-Hindus in India. They are 'guests' and guests have no rights; they are only entitled to security and reasonable courtesy, but only if they 'behave'. Badshah Khan does not seem to have understood this difference between the condition of Hindus in Muslim countries and of Muslims in India.

The Muslim attitude to non-Muslims has its roots in the early history of Islam itself. The Prophet did not merely establish Islam but also a state in Madina. Ever since, Muslims have not been able to separate religion from nationalism. That is why wherever they are in power they treat non-Muslims as second-class citizens, and wherever they are not in power they demand the right, to form a separate state on the ground that they constitute a separate 'nation'. They demanded, and ultimately got, a separate state for themselves in the Northern and Eastern parts of the Indian sub-continent. Even after the creation of Pakistan no real change in this attitude seems to have taken place. For instance, at a recent conference called by the Prime Minister at Delhi after the Ahmedabad riots,

Dr A. J. Faridi asserted that India was a multi-national state and that Muslims should be recognized as a separate nation.

However, Muslims are unwilling to concede a similar right to non-Muslim minorities, as has been illustrated by the attitude of the Federal Government of Nigeria to the attempt of the Christian Biafrans to set up a separate state of their own. At the same time, not only organisations like the Jamaat-e-Islami and Majlis-e-Mushawarat but many so-called do not see anything wrong in challenging the sovereignty of the Indian parliament in matters affecting the Muslim citizens of India.

I wish Badshah Khan had told some home truths to these standard-bearers of Muslim separatism in India. Perhaps he does not know that the award of the Nehru Prize to him by the Government of India was criticized by the Jamaat-e-Islami's weekly organ *Radiance*. In an editorial, *Radiance* asked how the Government of India would react if the Government of Pakistan were to award a similar prize to Phizo, the rebel Naga leader. It is a tragic irony that while those who were looking forward to Badshah Khan's visit to India were left confused and disappointed, Muslim communalists were more than pleased with him towards the end of his trip.

It seems to me that in spite of his close contact with Gandhi, Badshah Khan failed to understand the wisdom of his great leader. When Gandhi thought of the problems of the Hindus he could not do so without also thinking of the interests of the Muslims; when he thought of the problems of India, he could not forget those of the world. With Badshah Khan it is the other way round. When he thinks of the Hindus, he cannot forget that he is a Muslim —a Khudai Khidmatgar, no doubt, but a Muslim nonetheless; when he thinks of the Muslims, he cannot forget that he is a Pathan.

This also is implicit in the Muslim tradition. The Muslim mind has historically been incapable of introspection.

Consequently, well-meaning Muslim leaders like Badshah Khan can easily see the mote in other persons' eyes, they cannot see the beam in their own. They do not realise that in dealing with problems of this type only he can advise others who has first chastised his own fellow-men. Otherwise, they can best help by striving to reform the attitudes of their own community. A reform of one's own people also promotes, even if indirectly, a similar reform of others. By fighting obscurantism and narrow communalism in one's own community, one strengthens the hands of those who are engaged in a similar fight in the other community. Gandhi understood this, and therefore on many occasions he chose to keep quiet rather than criticize the Muslims. Unfortunately, Muslim society in India has not yet produced its own Gandhi. Indeed, it will not be able to do so till the ground is prepared by a generation of men who subject the religion and culture of the Muslims to a ruthless scrutiny in the light of modern values. Badshah Khan is a great and good Muslim, and also a follower of Gandhi. But he is no Gandhi himself. Therein lies the cause of his failure.

❐❐❐

The Meaning of Bangladesh

It is clear that the average non-Muslim Indian has spontaneously responded to the freedom struggle of the people of Bangla Desh. Of course, there is a section among the Hindus who have been pleading for caution. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was once a member of the Muslim League and a follower of Suhrawardy, and it was when Suhrawardy was the Prime Minister of Bengal that the Hindus were massacred in Noakhali. All this is true; but what is relevant today is the present nature of the Awami League and the fact that during the last two decades Mujibur Rahman has continuously worked for secularizing the politics of East Bengal. For instance, as early as 1958, in a speech in the National Assembly of Pakistan he declared that "President Ayub Khan is raising the bogey of Indian aggression only in order to consolidate his own power" and added: "If we come to power, we shall resolve the differences with India and reduce the defence expenditure of Pakistan." Even the Hindu refugees from East Pakistan vouch that he made sincere efforts to give protection to the Hindus and to quell the riots when the Hindus were violently attacked in East Bengal. At one time, Mujibur Rahman looked upon Jinnah as his leader; today he regards Subhash Chandra Bose as his ideal of a leader. This change in his attitude and in the aspirations of the people of East Bengal should be understood in the context of Muslim politics in the Indian sub-continent during the last one hundred years. Not to consider it in this, its legitimate, context would amount to persevering with the dogmatic and perverse view that Muslim communalism is something permanent and immutable.

The Muslim mind has always craved for power. It has seldom accepted territorial nationalism wherever Muslims are in a minority. Muslims throughout the world believe that Muslim society is a nation by itself. Where they are in majority this consciousness is not so evident. They are already in power in such places, and are therefore able to merge their Muslim nationalism with territorial nationalism. However, where Muslims are a minority Muslim communal nationalism is found to be in perpetual conflict with territorial nationalism. All that one can therefore say in the context of the events in Bangla Desh is that Mujibur Rahman is attempting a synthesis of linguistic territorial nationalism, on the one hand, and religion-based Muslim nationalism, on the other.

However, considering the political tradition of Muslims in the Indian sub-continent during the last hundred years, even this development is of revolutionary significance. In Arab as well as other Muslim countries, successful attempts have been made to synthesize Muslim nationalism with territorial nationalism. No such attempt was ever made in the Indian subcontinent. Jinnah believed that the Muslim community scattered throughout India constituted a nation. In undivided India he wanted this 'Muslim nation' to be given parity with the majority 'Hindu nation'. When he found that Muslims could not win parity with the Hindus, he began to work for the establishment of a separate, sovereign state of the Muslims. Such a state could only comprise those regions in which the Muslims were in a majority. The creation of such a nation therefore implied the cultural and political break-up of Muslim society. For not only the Muslims of the sub-continent were divided between India and Pakistan but within Pakistan itself; once the bogey of Hindu domination ceased to exercise the Muslim mind, non-religious factors defining territorial nationalism began to assert themselves. The revolt of Bangla

Desh is therefore a logical consequence of the partition of India. There is reason to believe that Jinnah as well as Nehru had some inkling of the inherent instability of Pakistan. For different but easily understandable reasons, neither ever talked about it in public. But it is significant that even after partition Jinnah and his successors have always found it necessary to keep alive the bogey of a 'Hindu India' bent on destroying Pakistan. Mr Bhutto is only the latest in this line.

However, neither Jinnah nor those who followed him were able to create and consolidate a sense of territorial nationalism among their people because none of them had accepted as final the political borders of Pakistan as laid down at the time of partition. The principle of parity and equal partnership which Jinnah propounded in undivided India continued to obsess the later rulers of Pakistan. They might not have articulated this attitude in clear terms. But their policy towards India and their insistence on claiming parts of Indian territory even after partition were rooted in this principle. It is true that there were some in the Muslim League—for example, Raja Ghaznafar Ali Khan—who believed that once a separate state in which the Muslim community was sovereign was established, the conflict need not be continued. The Raja made sincere efforts to protect the Hindus and Sikhs from Muslim communal violence when West Punjab was aflame after the partition. But such leaders were few. Mujibur Rahman was one of them.

It is necessary to realize that this change of attitude on the part of even a small number of Muslim leaders was possible only because of the partition. The tragedy and torments of partition were bound eventually to lead to the beginning of a Muslim renaissance in the Indian sub-continent. Its origins had to be in a colossal tragedy because of the nature of the historic tradition of Islam, which has made a militant

political ideology out of a proselytising religion.

While attempting to create a nation of their own the Muslims only achieved their own political, social and cultural disintegration. It is important for the Muslims to understand clearly the significance of this abortion of history. They will have to pay a heavy price for the partition, and the price will not be measured in political terms alone. The cultural and social cost of partition is as high, if not higher; and worse, it is recurring. They will also have to understand that the doctrine of Islam—organized and exclusivist as it is—has proved unsuccessful in facing the complex challenges of the modern age. On the other hand, though amorphous and disorganized, Hindu society will be able to cope with these challenges to a much greater extent than the dogmatic and organized but closed and exclusive Muslim society.

The revolt of Bangla Desh is not, therefore, related to the Bengali personality. It is a widespread but erroneous belief that the Bengali personality as such aspires to form an autonomous society. Indeed, even if all the citizens of Bangla Desh were Urdu-speaking, and even if they were not economically exploited by the West Pakistanis, a separate nationalism would still have thrived in Bangla Desh. Attack on economic exploitation is only an easily available weapon for the political demand for autonomy and the Bengali language is merely a symbol of the aspiration for a separate, territorial national identity. The germ of the political disintegration of Pakistan is to be found in the geographical fact that the two wings of Pakistan are separated from each other by nearly one thousand miles. In the emotional heat of the struggle for a separate state, the Muslims of the Indian sub-continent forgot even the facts of geography. Psychologically, Muslims do not recognize geographical boundaries. In practice, however, they are unconsciously drawn by the facts of life into the stream of

territorial nationalism. So far, there is not a single example of two geographically separate territories successfully constituting a single nation, and it was not possible for Pakistan to be an exception to this rule. Again, a nation is created with a purpose; its existence cannot be taken for granted in the absence of a secular purpose shared by its constituents. The rulers of Pakistan never recognized this. They took for granted the political unity of all Muslims qua Muslims. It takes systematic and sustained efforts to integrate every group and every territory into the single, broad framework of modern nationalism. If there is a variety of well-defined linguistic groups, for example, then it is necessary to harmonize the collective aspirations of each of them into the aspirations of the nation as a whole.. India has been trying to integrate such groups through, among other things, the linguistic reorganization of the States and equal autonomy to all the States. This may not have led to the desired degree of national integration, but integration would have been altogether impossible without regard to the aspirations of every individual linguistic group. Pakistan's approach to the same problem was, on the contrary, to abolish all linguistic provinces and to integrate them into a single province of West Pakistan. Today, ten years later, this one province has had to be again reorganized in terms of separate linguistic units. The rulers of Pakistan were naive enough to believe that human beings were merely so many flocks of sheep which could be herded together in a single compound and thus miraculously integrated into a single nation.

There are people in India who fear that the revolt of Bangla Desh would provide an impetus to the forces of disintegration which are latent in India itself. They do not take into account the radical dissimilarities between the political structures of the two countries. India is a geopolitical unit and when there is geographical unity, forces of disintegration can be easily

discouraged and weeded out. At one time the Czar established control over Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan, which were on the fringe of the Czarist Empire. England established control over India which lay thousands of miles away. Both these were conquests and as conquests, there was no difference between them. However, in the course of time, India became an overseas colony of England whereas Uzbekistan became a part of the Soviet Union. This is also the difference between the revolt in East Bengal, on the one hand, and the separatist movement in Nagaland or Kashmir, on the other hand. Kashmir and Nagaland have geographical continuity with India. Bangla Desh has none with West Pakistan.

There also are a few who express the apprehension that if Bangla Desh were to achieve independent nationhood it would lead to the process of both the Bengals together aspiring for reintegration. However, a major obstacle in the reunification of the two Bengals is the same communal conflict between the Hindus and the Muslims as led to the partition of Bengal and of the Indian sub-continent. Today, after having experienced the turmoil of the riots following partition, the Hindus would not like to be the citizens of a united Bengal with a Muslim majority. Nor would the Muslims of East Bengal like to have a united Bengal in which the Hindus would have an equal partnership. Again, it is not possible to visualize a united Bengal in the context of the strong communist movement in West Bengal. For in the event of a united Bengal being formed, the Muslims would comprise 51 per cent of its population and therefore unless the communist movement there is given an Islamic tinge, it would not strike a sympathetic chord in the minds of the Muslim masses. Mr Jyoti Basu is shrewd enough to understand that in such a situation the Bhadralok leadership of the communist movement in West Bengal would soon be eliminated.

The Bangla Desh revolt is an event which has shaken to the foundations the policies of all great powers towards the Indian sub-continent. Most Indians have so far been complaining that India had no friends in the outside world and that in every Indo-Pakistani dispute the great powers have always supported Pakistan. It is also believed that Pakistan has a powerful propaganda machinery and that it has an effective lobby in all countries. It is natural for them to feel that they are fair in dealing with Pakistan and yet the world has been backing the unjust position of Pakistan. They feel so because they are deeply aware of the post-partition history of Indo-Pakistani relations and the unpleasant facts of prepartition Muslim politics in this sub-continent. Even if reluctantly, India did concede the Muslim demand for a separate state in the form of Pakistan, and it did not seek to destroy Pakistan after it had come into being. On the contrary, it has always extended a friendly hand towards Pakistan. Often, disregarding strong public opinion, the Government of India made pacts with Pakistan such as the Indus Waters Pact. India gave equal rights to its minorities. After the partition, in the face of extreme pressure from Hindu revivalists, India gave itself a secular constitution. In contrast to Pakistan, India has always treated its minorities decently. Ever since independence, India has been able to preserve democracy and civil liberties. It has made efforts to achieve a gigantic social transformation through peaceful and democratic methods. More significantly, while all other new-born Afro-Asian nations were victims of political instability, India could preserve its own stability. When Indians feel aggrieved that other nations, and particularly the great powers, are always partial to Pakistan in Indo-Pakistani disputes, they cite all points. However, they forget that the policies of nation states are not based on criteria of objective justice but on considerations of *real politik*. Nations determine their

policies towards one another strictly in the light of their own interests. Considering the size, the population, the natural resources, and the geographical position of India, the great powers naturally think that it would be detrimental to their own interests if India were to become a world power. For, were India to become powerful, its influence would soon extend deep into the neighbouring nations and it would make inroads into the traditional spheres of the hegemony of the big powers. This would also lead to a radical change in the political balance of power in the world. Thus Britain has from the beginning nurtured a grudge against India because it was the Hindus who first demanded freedom, and it was they who articulated the nationalism of this country. Even before partition, the British hated the guts of the Indian National Congress which fought for India's independence. They had a soft corner for the Muslim League because it obstructed the struggle for freedom. After partition, although Britain's relations with India have obviously changed, in every Indo-Pakistani dispute it has supported Pakistan.

The policies of the United States and the Soviet Union did not have any such conditioning influence of the past. However, even they would not like India's political power to grow. In the early days of the cold war, the US backed Pakistan and the Soviet Union gave support to India—or so it seemed. But the Soviet Union's support to India was not a product of friendship or sympathy. Pakistan was a major link in America's military containment of the Soviet Union. The latter therefore made counter-moves against the US and lent support to India against Pakistan on the Kashmir issue. When the cold war began to resolve into a gradual detente, and when the Soviet Union's relations with China became sour, it modified its policy of unambiguous support to India. The Tashkent agreement was the culmination of this change in Soviet policy. Even Prime

Minister Shastri, who was a soft-spoken man, had to say, bitterly, about the Tashkent agreement: "Everybody has decided to condone the crimes of Pakistan!" And Mr Krishna Menon, who had been continuously supporting Soviet policies, was forced to observe that "Tashkent is a hoax."

This does not however mean that the US and the USSR are anti-Indian. Both of them agree that India should not be allowed to disintegrate. But they also want that it should remain a second-rate power, that it should not have any significant influence in the international competition for power, and that it should always play the role of a middle-man in peace efforts whenever convenient. Neither the Soviet Union nor the United States wants India's influence to exceed these limits. They are aware that apart from Pakistan none of the neighbouring small states regards India as hostile to it, and also that since the Indo-Pakistani conflict has a long historical background it is not likely to be resolved very soon. It is natural that these powers would want neither a war nor a resolution of the tensions between India and Pakistan. Their policies would be such as would keep Indo-Pakistani tensions unresolved and yet they would try to prevent a full-scale military conflict between the two nations. This policy has been and still is being reflected in the economic and other aid given to India and Pakistan; for instance, through greater aid to Pakistan the tensions between India and Pakistan have been effectively kept alive by the big powers.

However, the revolt of Bangla Desh has shaken the foundations of this policy. Till now, the great powers had been ignoring the inner contradictions of Pakistani politics. Now these contradictions have been exposed in the form of an open revolt by one wing of Pakistan against the Pakistani regime. Therefore, the great powers are confused and are unable to realign their policies towards Pakistan with the requirements

of the emerging situation. For if Pakistan disintegrates the pressures brought by them to bear on India would be less effective than they have so far been. The distortions that have marred India's foreign policy since 1954 are also likely to be removed. Therefore, at least for the present, it is in the interest of the great powers not to let Pakistan disintegrate, and their policies are likely to be framed on this basis. Hence they are not prepared to go beyond expressing lip sympathy for the people of East Bengal. However, in case Pakistan does break up into two nations, on the basis of this lip sympathy they can later claim to have been supporters of the freedom fighters of Bangla Desh. For the time being, they are merely waiting for the final outcome of the civil war. If the political map of the Indian sub-continent changes due to the creation of an independent Bangla Desh, they would be mainly interested in asserting their hegemony in the context of the new balance of power. This, in short, seems to be their present policy.

China's policy is broadly similar to those of the US and the USSR. However, it has its own peculiar slant. Until the Sino-Indian military conflict of 1962, China looked upon India as a competitor for Asian leadership. Now India decidedly lags behind China in this competition and therefore China no more considers India to be in a position to challenge its own quest for the leadership of Asia. Just as at one time the Soviet Union was brought closer to India due to the American policy of encirclement, today Soviet efforts to isolate China have brought China closer to Pakistan. China is determined not to let the Soviet Union maintain or extend its hegemony over the nations of South and South-east Asia. Even the anti-Indian statements issued by China in the context of Bangla Desh are an angry reaction to India's habit of toeing the Soviet line on every issue. If India wishes to bring about any change in China's policies, it will have to change its own policy towards

the Soviet Union. And India's policy towards the Soviet Union will largely depend on the outcome of the struggle for the liberation of Bangla Desh.

Pakistan's anti-Indian policy has distorted India's foreign policy towards the Muslim nations. If one takes a look at the map of India and its neighbouring territories, one will be struck by the fact that to its north India is fringed by Muslim nations in a semi-circular fashion. Pakistan has always made attempts to raise an anti-Indian front of these Muslim. And in order to prevent Pakistan from achieving this objective, India has evolved its present policy towards these nations. This is not the most appropriate place to discuss India's—and in particular, Nehru's—policy towards these Muslim Nations. With the exception of a few blunders Nehru's policies were far-sighted and they did achieve a certain measure of success. He might not have been successful in converting all these states into friends; but it is also true and significant that he was successful in preventing them from becoming enemies. Were Pakistan to disintegrate and become weaker, India would have no need to support the Arabs unconditionally in their fight against Israel. It is significant that all Muslim nations are either silent on the Bangla Desh issue or inclined to help Pakistan in preserving its unity. However, India has failed to grasp the significance of the attitude of Muslim nations. They are not sure whether they would continue to get India's support in their fight against Israel once Pakistan disintegrates. The greatest beneficiary of the disintegration of Pakistan would be India, and no Muslim nation would accept this with equanimity.

There are also religious motivations behind the present policy of the Muslim nations. Pakistan is the world's most populous Muslim state. The Muslim mind would never like Pakistan to disintegrate. Only recently, Muslim states have come together in a new organization and Pakistan is one of its

major members. If Pakistan disintegrates, the organization of Islamic states itself would be seriously weakened. Moreover, today the leadership of the Muslim world is largely with the Arabs. They believe that at least by tradition they inherit the leadership of the Muslim world. However, this would not be a lasting situation. Barring the Maghreb in Africa, fifty per cent of the newly independent nations of the world have a Muslim majority and their emergence in world politics will have far-reaching implications for the pan-Islamic movement. The balance of power among Muslim nations has been gradually shifting in favour of the African states. This is something which the Arabs would resent. In these changing circumstances and with their unpalatable possible consequences, it would not be surprising if the Arabs believed that the existence of a united Pakistan would be useful to them in retaining their hegemony over other Muslim nations.

However, it is more important to understand the reactions of Indian Muslims to the revolt of Bangla Desh. With the exception of a small section, most of them seem to be supporting the West Pakistani regime. They have been shaken by the revolt of Bangla Desh and instead of accepting the facts of the situation, they either believe that the Indian media have been exaggerating the happenings in East Bengal, or argue that the disintegration of Pakistan would spell the beginning of the process of the disintegration of India as well. Some are even bolder in stating their true feelings. They ask why India should interfere in the internal affairs of Pakistan. The boldest reactions are exemplified by the following exclamation in private talks: "Mujibur Rahman is a Mir Zafar. He should be shot dead!"

Indian Muslims who now demand that India should not interfere in the internal affairs of Pakistan and warn that if Pakistan disintegrates India too would follow suit, did not

protest when Pakistan interfered in India's internal affairs, supplied arms to the Nagas and the Mizos, and actively worked for India's disintegration. On the contrary, they want Pakistan to remain united so that India would eventually disintegrate. In his *Meaning of Pakistan*, R K. Khan Durrani argues that the creation of Pakistan was necessary as a base for conquering the rest of India. The reaction of Indian Muslims to Bangla Desh gains meaning in the context of Durrani's argument. None of the Muslim organizations in India has conceded the right of self-determination to Bangla Desh. At best, they have vaguely supported the halting policy of the Indian Government.

The revolt of Bangla Desh is an occasion for a fresh examination of the Hindu-Muslim problem and the remedies suggested for resolving the communal conflicts through which it often expresses itself. Most of the proposed solutions have nothing new or original about them, nor has any political party except the SSP tried to relate the communal problem in India to that of Bangla Desh. The SSP has once again put forward the idea of a sub-continental federation that was first mooted by the late Ram Manohar Lohia some years ago. Lohia argued that partition had failed to solve the problem. This may be true, but it is doubtful whether Lohia understood the reasons for this failure. The fact is that most Hindus continue to be obsessed with the dream of an India that is reunited. The obsession appears in two forms. There is a small group of Hindus which still is unreconciled to partition on the ground that India is the home of the Hindus and that the creation of Pakistan is really an act of continuing aggression by the Muslims. The second, and larger, group's concept of Indian territorial nationalism is based on the geopolitical boundaries of undivided India and on the Hindu cultural and historical traditions. They would willingly grant equality to Muslims as

to other non-Hindu communities within the framework of their own brand of nationalism. In order that their dream be realized, they would even go to the extent of conceding parity to the Muslims though they would constitute only about twenty-five per cent of the population of united India. On the one hand, they wonder why Gandhi and Nehru failed to reach agreement with Jinnah, and why the Congress Party in 1937 could not accommodate the Muslim League in the U.P. Ministry. On the other hand, they also blame Gandhi and Nehru, especially the latter, for having rejected the Three Unit Plan before the partition. In short, they are Utopians who are willing to purchase their dream of a united India at any price, no matter how great. The logic of power politics has always been beyond their ken. They forget that the Muslims in India would, in certain circumstances, be more passionate champions of a united India—only their conception of united India would be different from that of the Hindu utopians. If partition has failed to bring about lasting communal harmony to the sub-continent, the reason has to be looked for in the Muslim aspiration to rule the entire sub-continent. The revivalist Muslims wanted to achieve goal through religious conversions. Jinnah and the western educated Muslim intelligentsia wanted to achieve it through political means, for instance, through parity and fifty percent partnership with the Hindus in running the state. Nehru was shrewd enough to see through this strategy.

Nehru's own views were sharply different from the two trends among the Hindus described above. He accepted as relevant India's historical but not its religious traditions. He opposed the demand for Pakistan because he believed that the minorities had a righthful claim to equality, but none to seccession. He did not take for granted the existence of an Indian nation; his ambition was to create a modern nation in

which every citizen would have equal rights regardless of caste, creed, race or language. At the same time—and this is where he and Sardar Patel differed from Gandhi——he did not wish to prevent the partition of India if the price of unity was too high in human terms. He therefore decided that if the Muslims were unwilling to accept common citizenship on the basis of equality, it was better to let them separate. Today's events prove that this was a wise decision.

Ideas such as that of a sub-continental federation, thrown up in an emotionally charged atmosphere of the kind created by the revolt of Bangla Desh, are likely to give a dangerous turn to Muslim politics in India. Revivalist Indian Muslims have always championed the demand for an undivided India for reasons indicated earlier. The Muslim intelligentsia in India, on the other hand, advocated the doctrine of parity before partition, and after partition, the doctrine of a separate, autonomous status for the Muslim community as a political entity. However, when they realize that the experiment of a separate Muslim state in the Indian sub-continent has irreparably failed, all of them—in India as well as in Pakistan—are likely to uphold the idea of a subcontinental federation. This may not happen immediately. For the time being, Muslims will continue to take the stand that Pakistan should not be allowed to disintegrate. But once such disintegration seem inevitable, there will be a call for a new political solution of the Hindu-Muslim problem on the lines mentioned above. Suggestions implying the need for such a solution have already been made, albeit in a guarded manner. *Radiance,* the organ of the Jamaat-e-Islami, has in a recent issue (May 2) editorially observed that not only has the two-nation theory failed but also the idea that India is a single nation has been proved without substance. It is imperative now, according to *Radiance,* to recognize that India consists of several nations.

Another well-known Muslim commentator, writing in the *Sunday Standard* on pre-partition politics in Bengal, ends his article on the same note but in more sophisticated terms.

The real question, however, is not how India and Pakistan can be reunited ; it is, rather, how soon can Bangla Desh emerge as a free country. For once Bangla Desh is a viable political reality, Muslim society in the sub-continent will begin to undergo rapid fragmentation. This will, in the course of time, lead to the erosion of the tribal, collective identity which has characterized traditional Muslim politics in India. The political disintegration of Pakistan will nurture the nascent movements towards secularism and liberalism in Muslim society. This is the significance of Bangla Desh which democrats in India have yet to grasp.

□□□

An Interview

The Angry Young Secularist

by Dilip Chitre

I met Hamid Dalwai twelve years ago in the crowded and musty office of a Marathi literary magazine. At that time he had already made his mark as a short story writer while I, who was younger and practically unknown in literary circles, carried all my unpublished writing on my person. (Since I wrote only poems then, the most portable of literary genres, this was not difficult.) He had already published a brilliant short story called *Kafanchor* (meaning: 'The Shroud-stealer').

He has not, in appearance, changed much since. But if my vague memory is right, he sported a full beard then. I too had a full beard. But his beard was treated with a different sort of significance. Although he spoke Marathi with an authentic Chiplun accent, he was a Muslim. Some of his readers, reading his fluent Marathi, even thought that the name 'Hamid Dalwai' was a pseudonym. This, too, is quite significant. If I remember correctly, when I met him first what drew my attention to him was the fact that another Marathi writer greeted him with the mock-exclamation *"Ya Yavan!"* The word *'Yavan'* was formerly used for Greeks, but after the Hindu revival it has been specifically reserved for Muslims, at least in Marathi. A *Yavan* is a 'bloody foreigner'—an outsider with doubtful credentials. The greeting was jocular, but not insignificant.

During the last twelve years, things have changed for both of us. I have been generally preoccupied with creative and

critical writing. Hamid Dalwai on the other hand is totally involved in a much more unsafe and urgent social and cultural task. He is working with stupendous intensity on an almost one-man programme to create a modern, secular, and democratic consciousness among Indian Muslims. So now, in addition to being a *Yavan* to Hindus, he has achieved the distinction of becoming a *kafir* to orthodox Muslims. He has not entirely given up creative writing. But today he spends most of his time lecturing to Hindu and Muslim audiences throughout India. He meets younger Muslims and talks to them. He engages in all kinds of debates and polemics. It was he who led the first morcha ever of Muslim women in Bombay to the Chief Minister, demanding modernization of Muslim personal law. A similar *morcha* in Poona was even greater in size and impact. Incidentally, the Chief Minister of Maharashtra met the deputationists, but the Prime Minister of India—a woman herself— refused even to see for a few minutes the woman leader of the morcha in Poona!

Now in his middle thirties, Hamid looks younger than he is. He is, on principle, clean-shaven now. At one of his public meetings at Sholapur, he said that if he were in power he would compel all Muslims to shave off their beards. Beards have become a community emblem for some Muslims. It is like those Hindus who still display their caste-marks in this so-called secular society. However, the next day, at another rally, a shrewd old orthodox Muslim, referring to Hamid's proposal for a compulsory removal of beards, observed: "We had been told that our friend Mr Hamid Dalwai was a learned man from Bombay. But yesterday, during his discourse, we were taken aback when we discovered that he was only a self-championing barber. . . !" Hamid himself told me this story, roaring with laughter.

Hamid Dalwai is a self-made man. He does not have a

university degree. He comes from an extremely poor family living in a village on the Konkan coast. And yet today he is one of those few young Indians who are action-oriented in a selfless way. He has risked his life and the security of his family.

His last novel, *Indhan* ('Fuel') sparked off a series of explosions in his native village. In the novel, a Maharashtrian young women—a high-caste Brahmin—attempts to seduce the bachelor protagonist-narrator after having had a long affair with his married elder brother. The protagonist is a Muslim. This really proved to be 'Fuel': the orthodox Muslims in Hamid's village instigated the orthodox Hindus to protest! Together, the entire orthodoxy boycotted and persecuted Hamid's eighty year old father. Such is the fear of pollution and such are the notions of parallel purity and compartmentalized 'co-existence' in communalist India in the nineteen-sixties. In Bombay, Hamid received anonymous letters threatening the life of his young daughter and his wife, besides his own.

Despite his lack of formal education, he can write and argue very well. He is not an intellectual. But his sincerity distinguishes him anywhere. His human warmth and sense of humour make him an admirable conversationalist. He has been a journalist, an active political-worker (SSP), and a creative writer. Bat of late, these things have slid into the background: his central concern is with making the people around him sane, sober, modern, secular and democratic citizens. And he works. This sets him apart from intellectual sitters-on-the-fence as well as from political opportunists of all shades of colour.

I decided to interview him because it is a unique thing, at least in present-day India, for a promising creative writer to forgo his literary ambition and get involved in social and cultural action.

When I interviewed Hamid Dalwai recently, he was not

exactly prepared for it. Nor was I. We met at my office—for, not having a study of his own, Hamid is continuously in circulation—by previous appointment. It was four o'clock in the afternoon. The weather was stuffy and uninspiring as it is just before the monsoon sets in. Hamid walked in and settled down in front of me and continued to read a weekly which he had already unfolded. Unsure of how to begin, I said, "So, I am going to interview you, am I?" He dropped the paper on the table and winked with his green-grey eyes.

It is difficult to 'interview' Hamid in the conventional sense of the term. When he speaks it is a mixture of conversation, monologue, and public speaking. His voice has a terrific volume. And his speaking has a kind of absentminded velocity too. So, when he is quite involved, he is unstoppable. He drowns one's interruptions into the sheer volume of his own voice. But fortunately, he has the uncanny knack of anticipating one's next question.

"When did you first start taking Muslim communalism seriously?" I asked. "I was born in 1932," he began, "in a Maharashtrian Muslim family. It was in 1946, I think, when I joined the Rashtra Seva Dal that I was first confronted by the problem. When I joined the Rashtra Seva Dal, I was the first and only Muslim boy in my village to do so."

"What was the reaction of your parents and other Muslims?", I asked him.

"Hostile," he said, as if I should have known the answer.

"Why?"

"They thought it wasn't the right thing to do. One should not leave one's own fold. Muslims should stay among Muslims: it is that simple!"

"And then? Did you continue?"

"Of course, I did. I couldn't understand why I shouldn't have done it." Then he paused for a while and said, "Look! I

have got to say some more important things. Let me finish these autobiographical preliminaries quickly. Are they necessary at all? Anyway! When I was studying for my S.S.C. examination, I wrote some articles on Urdu and the Marathi-speaking Muslims. They were published by a leading Marathi daily in Bombay. They even provoked editorial comments." He chuckled and paused again.

"You took to politics quite early, didn't you?" I asked, taking advantage of the unexpected pause.

"Yes," he said telegraphically, "Congress Socialist Party—-Socialist Party—Praja-Socialist party—.Socialist Party (the Lohia one)—Samyukta Socialist; that was how it went."

"Are you still with the SSP?" I asked.

"Yes and no!" he said, "I totally disapprove of their line on communalism.

"In fact, it's a wide rift. The point is, the SSP has failed to take up a clear, hard line on Muslim communalism."

"Do you see any other party which has?"

"No!" he said, "They are all equally reluctant to undertake the task of real social transformation—which is the crux of the problem."

"What do you think this task involves?"

"First and foremost, people must be made conscious that there is such a thing as fundamental human values and these must be separated from religious values. This is something which Muslims would never concede because it is claimed that the Koran itself defines fundamental human values perfectly." Here he paused, winked again for effect, and added, "They are as orthodox and anti-modern as the Communists in this respect. Theirs is a closed system."

"Isn't there any liberal tradition among Indian Muslims?"

He laughed, "Indiana Muslims are, as a rule, liberal only when Hindus blame communalist Hindus." Then he continued

in a more serious tone, "Sir Syed Ahmed Khan was a liberal. Today, I can count them on my fingers. Professor Mohammad Habib, the opposition candidate for Vice-Presidency last elections, M.C. Chagla is liberal, Dr. Rashiduddin Khan of Osmania University is another liberal I know." His look became a little abstracted. "You know among Hindus there is a modern, liberal tradition starting from Raja Rammohun Roy. Nehru, in my estimate was a modern, secular Indian liberal. But he had a tradition behind him. There is no parallel to this among Indian Muslims."

"Why?" I asked.

"Well! It is all there in their history. Muslims were rulers in India for 800 years. And yet they have remained a permanent minority. They strongly resent this. You will find that wherever they are in a minority Muslims always resist secular integration. In India, it is worse. The *ulema* still dream of a *Dar-ul-Islam* in this sub-continent. That was why they opposed partition, not because they were interested in secular Indian nationalism. Those who implicitly accepted the fact that Muslims would remain a permanent minority in the sub-continent demanded Pakistan and got it. But those who still remain here dream of a 'deliverer'—which is an illusion, almost a sickness. Now while the *ulema* sided with the Congress in opposing partition, after partition they still continue to champion a separate Muslim identity: a parallel society within the Indian society that will have the least possible to do with non-Muslims. Mentally, they still live in a medieval world. And they do not realize that this makes them misfits in 'the modern world."

"How do Indian Muslims react to 'Muslims' like you?"

"Well! To most of them I am a sort of a *kafir,* an infidel!"

"How then do you expect to have an impact on them?"

"I have hopes. For instance, Muslim girls and women in India do show an awareness of the inequities of Muslim personal

law. But this is a difficult task, I mean the task of secular integration. No political party in India is forthright enough to take steps towards eradicating communalism. They appease the Muslims. My own party—the SSP—is no exception. There has to be a non-party organization to tackle the problem. We have made a small beginning in this direction in the form of Indian Secular Forum."

"What is the response?"

"Not very encouraging, except that a few dedicated people have joined us. Some have come up with financial help. But financially, we are very badly off."

"How do you work?"

"Ah!" he said, "I move about, talk to people, try to make them think and argue. I write articles too."

"What about your creative writing?"

"It will look after itself, I suppose, when the need arises!" he said, "Right now, this is all that is bothering me: political parties have failed to solve the problem. The National Integration Convention was just a joke. People come up with mere platitudes. Nobody tries to go to the root of the problem."

"What about the Hindu liberals you spoke of?"

"Even they will be eventually swallowed up by Hindu revivalism and Muslim revivalism which seem to be acting, ironically, in collusion. If secular democratic ideals are to survive, all liberal forces in this country have to rally and work together on a non-party, non-political basis!" He paused and added, finally, "One can't helplessly watch the game. The rules have to change."

❐❐❐